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**Libya and News Media:
the production and reception
of new-media news output**

IBRAHIM ALI OMER

A thesis submitted in fulfilment
Of the requirements of
University of Northumbria at Newcastle
For the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy

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Abstract

The study takes ideological domination in the field of the media as a point of departure, concentrating on current affairs as one of the most keenly debated issues in the field of mass media since the emergence of news agencies and up to the present age of satellite television channels. The study deals in particular with monopolies of news coverage by the major news agencies, including Reuters, Associated Press (AP), United Press International (UP), and Agence France Press (AFP).

The study focuses on the cultural dimensions of news stories and the controversies over their content which have spurred regional and international efforts to establish alternatives to the one-way flow of news and information from core countries to the rest of the world.

The study also focuses on American domination in the field of news and the establishment of CNN, which has itself become a symbol of American influence as well as a significant influence on the live news coverage of events. The impact of CNN has also triggered many reactions, including efforts in various countries to compete with it in order to cover the news from perspectives within these countries. The study goes on to focus on the Arab region, which has its own characteristics but also shares many features with other peripheral countries, particularly in the field of the mass media and the reliance of Arab audiences on news sources in core countries.

This study deals with various issues concerning the mass media and news coverage in the Arab region, providing a historical framework for the development of its mass media; the political atmosphere and other factors which have affected their performance. The study also examines attempts by Arab countries to work collectively in order to establish alternatives to the core countries' news outlets. By focusing on the Arab region this study

aims to examine in particular the significance of the Arab satellite news channels and their success in competing with the news outlets of core countries. The competitiveness of the Arab satellite channels is evaluated, considering Al-Jazeera as a particularly important example. The study finally focuses on Libya as an example both of an Arab country and as a representative of peripheral countries. This section of the work involves an empirical study into perception and evaluation of regional and international news. This provides ideal opportunities to assess the theoretical framework of the study with references to the features and difficulties of peripheral countries. Libya's efforts in the field of mass media, and particularly its news outlets, are also evaluated. In addition the study examines the attitudes of the Libyan people towards domestic, regional and international news outlets and their significance in terms of news coverage. This provides a thorough understanding of the perceived weaknesses and strengths of these news outlets, and such information may help in the development of a new strategy for the Libyan mass media in order to make them more competitive.

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Author's Declaration

I hereby declare that the following thesis entitled "Libya and News Media" is entirely my own work and has not been submitted for any other award.

Ibrahim Ali

April 2009

CHAPTER ONE

GENERAL INTRODUCTION & PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

Introduction

The first chapter presents a background discussion regarding domination in the field of news as a global phenomenon. It also deals with the unequal flow of information from big nations to small nations and discusses terms such as 'cultural-imperialism' and 'core/peripheral' models and their relationship with the mass media. This section also refers in particular to Schiller's (1996, 2001) analysis which considers political economy.

Chapter One presents a statement of the problem in this study and then focuses on the aims which this study intends to achieve. This chapter also deals with the contribution and significance of the study and the methods and procedures that have been followed. It also deals with Libya's geography and population and gives a brief background of Libya's history and political system, referring in particular to Vandewalle (2006), Al Magrabi (2004) and Elfathaly and Palmer (1980). It also gives information about the Libyan people and discusses the factors which have had an influence on Libyan identity, such as the Italian colonization which began in 1911. This casts light on the Libyan political system since the country's independence which was declared on December 24th, 1951, and the changes which have since occurred in its political system, particularly after the removal of the monarchy and the establishment of the republican regime on September 1st, 1969.

The chapter also deals with the issue of Libyan international relations, discussing the sanctions on Libya imposed by the West after the Lockerbie disaster, and the accusations that the Libyan intelligence agency was responsible. This chapter also deals with shifts in Libyan foreign policy toward the West, and the improvement of its bilateral relationships.

Domination in the Field of the Media as a Global Phenomenon

The relationship between core and peripheral countries in the field of media has led to a wide range of debates, as many countries consider that this phenomenon has an impact on cultural identity and political and economic relations in every nation. It may be argued that this has created great difficulties in conducting an adequate analysis in a single study. One key aspect of this phenomenon is the domination in the field of news, which has been a controversial issue for a long time. The unequal flow of news from core countries to the rest of the world is the main issue in this study. The case of the unequal flow of news and information from the North to the South was the central theme of McBride's 'Many Voices, One World' report sponsored by UNESCO in 1980, with its search for a new world information and communication order (NWICO). Although the heated debates in UNESCO around this issue have waned, the problems raised were not resolved, as areas of contention between the North and the South seem to have remained. Chapter two deals with these issues in more detail.

An economic analysis is carried out into the inequalities of information distribution, categorising each country as a core country, a semi peripheral country or a peripheral country. There are different categories of nations which are sometimes linked to geography within the field of media studies, and it is believed to be more appropriate to categorise nations and regions using a 'core/peripheral' model as opposed to referring to the North and South or Western/Eastern hemispheres. "The idea of a 'world system' and a 'core-periphery' model of global political-economic power are typical of the broadly neo-Marxist paradigm in development studies known as 'dependency theory' (Tomlinson, 1991, p23). The concepts of hegemony or domination are the departure point for this study. These two terms are controversial, particularly in the context of the media. According to Harvey (2003), "Gramsci's own

use of the concept (hegemony) was sufficiently ambiguous and allowed multiple interpretations. It sometimes refers solely to political power exercised through the leadership and the consent of the governed, as opposed to political power exercised as domination through coercion. On other occasions it seems to refer to the particular mix of coercion and consent imbedded in the exercise of political power” (Harvey, 2003, p36).

The relationship between core and peripheral countries seems to reflect Gramsci’s definition of domination. Methods of consent are used when it comes to emulation or cultural exportation, and coercion when it concerns the military invasion of peripheral countries such as Afghanistan and Iraq. However, Tomlinson prefers to use the term 'cultural imperialism': “It may be argued that 'imperialism' grasps a specific form of domination that is associated with 'empire'. So, in the case of cultural imperialism in the third world, this term might point towards the links between present domination and a colonial past” (Tomlinson, 1991, p19). The term 'imperialism' is widely used, but most generally “as an extension or imposition of the power, authority or influence of a state over other states, or stateless communities” (Arrighi, 2005, p27). According to Fejes (1981), ascertaining and differentiating cultural imperialism from the economic must be done by analysing the 'content of media texts, the reception of this content, and the impact of the reception, “on the lives and human relationships of third world populations. This is the cultural dimension of the media” (Fejes 1981, p287).

Other perspectives useful in this study include Schiller’s (1996, 2001) analysis, which considers political economy. This is based on the ownership and control of media products and the way in which television programmes, advertisements, and news are produced and distributed. This particularly involves the market dominance of powerful multinational corporations (Tomlinson, 1991, p36). Schiller’s analysis is useful in

describing the disparities between core and peripheral countries and other global and domestic inequalities. The second chapter deals with these arguments in more detail.

Nowadays, the technological advances of satellite television have allowed a greater number of channels, and the world has become more like a village, as McLuhan (1989) said. The use of these technologies means that the television signals avoid state control, creating a wide range of viewing opportunities. The world today is facing the absolute domination of the core countries in the field of the media, particularly in the area of news. This domination is particularly felt by peripheral countries whose media are relatively undeveloped. The state of mass media in the world today has been summarised by McPhail (2002). Firstly, all major news agencies, such as the Associated Press, Reuters and Agence France Press, are based in and owned by core countries. These news agencies provide about 90 per cent of the entire world's news. Secondly, the most powerful newspapers and magazines are published in core countries, particularly in the United States. Thirdly, international radio programmers such as the BBC and Deutsche Welle broadcast from core countries and direct broadcasting to peripheral countries in different languages. Fourthly, global television news and newsreels such as CNN, BBC, AP and Reuters have established worldwide markets for their products that use video material produced or designed for initial use in the United States, Great Britain, or other Western media systems. Also, television programming and feature films are almost exclusively the province of Western nations. Over two-thirds of global video programming available comes from the United States alone. Finally, the major advertising agencies are based in core countries, particularly the United States, and only small branch offices are located in semi-peripheral or peripheral nations (McPhail, 2002, p31).

Nowadays, the technology of satellite channels seems to reinforce and stimulate the "one way flow" of news and information from the core countries to the peripheral

countries such as Libya. The development of this technology, harnessed by news distribution infrastructures, has enabled news access for a wider world audience. On the other hand, the local media in the peripheral countries have faced threats from the larger core countries. In fact peripheral countries in particular find it difficult to compete with core countries in the field of news coverage due to a lack of good infrastructure and financial difficulties. As a consequence, peripheral countries have tried various different strategies in response, such as censorship, working collectively and establishing effective mass media, in order to attract the audience who have become a target of the core countries' mass media and satellite channels.

The Libyan people now have a wide range of options from different countries, making the functioning of the Libyan domestic media extremely difficult. So this study examines the domination of mass media, focussing on the flow of information from television satellite channels and their influence on Libyan people following the news.

Statement of the Problem

The key issue of this thesis relates to core country domination in the field of news, and the controversy over the one-way flow of news. It also provides an analysis of the peripheral countries' collective efforts, and the difficulties encountered in establishing an effective medium to combat the flow of news from core countries. The study aims to analyse the significance of satellite channels in terms of news coverage in the Arab region. The study focuses on Libya, which is a good example of a peripheral Arab country trying to compete in the field of news. A survey is conducted to explore the viewing preferences of the Libyan audience. The study also analyses the strengths and weaknesses of both local and international media, focusing on the appeal of satellite channels and the less appealing nature of the local media which push the people to look for other options.

The aims of this study are:

- 1 To analyze the domination of core countries in the field of mass media and the one-way flow of news from core countries to peripheral countries.
- 2 To analyze the controversy over news coverage and the alternatives set by peripheral countries in this domain.
- 3 To assess opportunities provided by the new technology of satellite channels for peripheral countries, particularly in the field of news, and the examples which could be followed by the rest of these countries.
- 4 To determine extent to which the major television channels are sources of news for the Libyan people.
- 5 To identify and understand the reasons behind Libyan viewing preferences.
- 6 To assess the significance of local media as a source of news for the Libyan people.
- 7 To discuss Libyan peoples` evaluation of the performance of local news media.

The Research Questions

The main questions which the study aims to answer are a guide which has helped the research to focus on these issues in particular. On the other hand, the answers to these questions throughout the work will also clarify what the study tends to grasp and add to the field of knowledge.

- Does new satellite technology provide a plausible opportunity to the peripheral countries to compete with core countries in the field of news?
- Are there any technical, political or financial difficulties which hamper the performance of the Libyan media?
- What are the main sources of news which the Libyan people rely on? Are they domestic, regional or international outlets?

- What examples should the Libyan media follow in order to perform more effectively in terms of news coverage?

Contribution and significance of this study

There is a shortage of such studies in Libya, particularly concerning the significance of Arabic and international satellite channels and their impact. There is also a lack of readership figures, for both local and foreign newspapers. It is believed that there needs to be a greater amount of research done in this area, and this study aims to provide new insights in this field.

This study intends to clarify the use of local media by the Libyan people, and to identify the weaknesses and strengths of Libyan media in the field of news. The findings of this study could be used by the Libyan media in adopting new strategies in the future.

The Relationship between this Research and Previous and Current Studies

This study is based on discussions and arguments advanced by the following researchers: Schiller (1982), Samarjiwa (1984), Garnham (1990), Tomlison (1991), Macphail (2002), Webster (2002), and Arrighi (2005). These studies have highlighted the phenomenon of domination and cultural imperialism and how the global market has affected the flows of information and shaped the world media. Various studies which have focused on the national and international news channels and agencies were significant to this study, such as Schudson (1995), Edward (1999), Boyd (2000), Ammon (2001), Silvia (2001), and Gitlin (2003).

Two studies concerning Libya have been very important to this study. The methodology used in Obeidi's (1996) research into political culture in Libya, using Garyounis University as a case study, was followed in this study. The empirical method used was survey research. The study used both questionnaires and interviews. A sample of 500 Libyan students of both sexes was used for a questionnaire study, and interviews were conducted with 15 students.

The second study was carried out by Elfotaysi (1996), and concerned the development of Libyan television broadcasting from 1968-1995. Elfotaysi focused on Libyan television broadcasting, regulation and programming as well as the local production and importation of television programmes. His study concluded that Libyan television broadcasting faced various artistic and technical obstacles preventing it from making the necessary improvements (Elfotaysi, 1996, p262). Some of these obstacles were technical and others concerned administration and censorship. Elfotaysi's work is the nearest to the present study in exploring television programming in Libya. However, the present research is restricted to the nature of television news channels.

The Limitations of the Study

The phenomenon of domination is a vexed issue. It is linked with political, cultural, social and economic elements and is therefore very difficult to cover in a single study. Studying the influence of the mass media is also a broad subject and difficult to achieve in one study. The study is limited largely due to the constraints of access to the populace. Students were chosen as a sample of the population due to time limits and the costs associated with a single researcher collecting data from the general public. This study uses students at Al-Fateh University as a case study. It is believed that university students are suitable for this research, as they are highly educated and

therefore more likely to watch satellite channels in different languages. The University of Al-Fateh is one of the biggest universities in Libya and has a wide cross section of students from different cities, social classes and backgrounds. It was also decided not to raise questions which may be considered highly political and which may have prevented the respondents from expressing their opinions freely. In this respect the researcher asked indirect questions in order to gain useful information. For example in covering issues regarding the societal context and the discussions of the news, which may provide a clearer picture of the atmosphere surrounding the reception of news in Libya. As we will discuss in chapter six, for example many people prefer to discuss the news with friends and relatives rather than colleagues. This could be considered as a sign of courtesy and reservation when it comes to the discussion of political news in particular. By practising such discussion, respondents feel more comfortable and can express their opinions regarding many issues which may be considered as sensitive or highly political in other contexts.

One of the major difficulties was to ask the respondents direct questions regarding censorship and government interference, particularly in the news context. Asking indirect questions may have allowed respondents to refer to some of these points regarding censorship without actually calling it censorship or clearly criticising such policy. This could be discerned in the responses regarding the social context of discussions and their disapproval of the Libyan media performance in terms of news. Also such points were more clear in the interview responses particularly of media producers and experts. Gathering such information will help to bridge the gap which may occur between the aims of the study and the findings.

Methods and Procedures

This study has two main parts; theoretical and empirical. The first part is the theoretical analysis to the nature of domination in the field of news as a global phenomenon. This analysis is essential of the study as it also provides a historical background of the domination of core countries over peripheral countries in terms of news. Also it analyses the performance of Arab television news channels as new alternatives for news in the Arab region. This provides a framework to the study as a whole. The second part is the practical work which examines to what extent this phenomenon affects the Libyan people in terms of news, whether core countries continue to dominate, and what barriers for Arab television channels prevent them from challenging that domination. In following these methods the research aims to examine the experiences of Libyan people and to link the theoretical work with these experiences.

This study combines both quantitative and qualitative research methods. It is believed that this is the most effective means of finding the sources of information that Libyan people rely on, as Bryman (1988) has suggested, social scientists are likely to create confidence in their findings when they employ more than one method of investigation, and hence more than one type of data (Bryman, 1988, p131). Two methods of data collection were used: questionnaire survey and interviews. Survey research was chosen as an empirical method in order to explore the preferences, attitudes and evaluations of Libyan university students at Al-Fateh University towards satellite television channels. In order to gain information about issues concerning people's attitudes and experiences towards television satellite channels, thirty interviews were also conducted. The interviews aim to collect information which is usually difficult to gain via a questionnaire. As Walker (1985) has suggested, the choice of qualitative techniques as the main approach during the principal phase of a project frequently

depends on the research topic (Walker, 1985, p20). Walker further suggested that qualitative research could be especially useful when the topic is complicated or sensitive (Walker, 1985, p20).

The Questionnaire

The questionnaire consisted of 27 open and closed-ended as well as multiple-choice questions. The questionnaire was designed and written in English and translated into Arabic (Appendix A). The questionnaire was first pilot tested among 30 students from different departments at Al-Fateh University. Some amendments were made to the questionnaire as a result of the pilot testing. The questionnaire was distributed to a representative sample of students at Al-Fateh University in Tripoli. Chapter 5 of this study deals with this in more detail.

The Interviews

Interviews were conducted with 10 media experts, 10 media producers, and 10 older people, aiming to explore and clarify aspects of the Libyan media and their performance in the field of news (the interview questions can be found in Appendices B1, B2, and B3). Interviews are one of the main sources of collecting data in the field of the social sciences. "The fact that the interviewer represents a profession or an institution or both, designed to provide a service or to obtain information, makes him primarily responsible for the direction of the conversation" (Molyneaux, 1982, p3). An advantage of the interview as a research procedure is that any misunderstanding on the part of the interviewer or the interviewee can be checked immediately (Brenner, 1985, p3).

Interviews also were carried out as another means of identifying key issues. The questions asked in the interviews aimed to examine perception of the Libyan media's weaknesses and strengths, and whether Libyan TV and other mass media could compete with the international media, particularly news channels, as well as, what measures should be taken to make the Libyan media more effective.

Choice of Subject

Particularly after the emergence of satellite channels and the internet, the flow of news has become a global issue. It has also become more significant to the peripheral countries. Nowadays, people in these countries can receive a variety of media options and a diversity of perspectives. This is considered to be a new phenomenon. Libya is one of the countries facing this kind of challenge. One of this study's aims is to explore the significance of the relationship between Arabic, international and domestic media in the field of news, which may lead to a development of strategy among the Libyan media.

The present author's personal interest in this issue sprang from two main concerns:

The first is that the relationship between the major and the smaller nations has always attracted me, in particular the influence of core nations and what economic and political alternatives are available for smaller countries. Recent international events have turned my attention to this issue into a real obsession with the question of why there are so many nations across the world whose voices cannot be heard and who have no influence in global issues. The second reason is that, during my short and humble experience in the academic field, many students have asked me whether or not Libya could establish competitive and successful mass media, particularly given the success of satellite television channels in the region such as Al-Jazeera and Al-

Arabiya. As a lecturer in the mass media I have also been asked the same question by many Libyan intellectuals. This particular question has become one of the main questions which this study aims to answer.

Libyan Geography and Population

Libya is a country in North Africa. Towards the east it is bordered by Egypt and the Sudan, in the west it borders on Tunisia and Algeria, and to the south it has borders with Niger and Chad. To the north is the Mediterranean Sea. Figure 1 shows a map of Libya.

Figure 1 - Map of Libya



Source: <http://www.libyana.org/maps/>

The surface area of Libya is 1,759,540 sq km. and its population is 5,765,563. Arabic is the native language, but Italian and English are widely used, particularly among the upper classes and businessmen, and are understood by many people in most Libyan cities. Libya is divided into 32 municipalities and its capital is Tripoli (see Table 1).

Libya is mostly desert country and has a severe climate and poor soil. These factors strongly affect agricultural output and the distribution of the population.

Table 1 - The municipalities in Libya

Number	Municipality	Number	Municipality
1	Alzaweha	17	El botnan
2	Sobratha	18	Dernh
3	Al nekat Alkhmes	19	Elgobah
4	Geryan	20	Al Jabel al
5	Yfren	21	Akhder
6	Naloot	22	Al merej
7	Sebha	23	Bengahzi
8	Wadi Al shati	24	Ejdabya
9	Mourzok	25	Serat
10	Awbari	26	Baniwaleed
11	Elhezam alakhder	27	Eljofrah
12	Alwahat	28	Elkofrah
13	Mezdah	29	Mesrata
14	Gadames	30	Almergeb
15	Ghat	31	Trhona
16	Tajourah	32	Tripoli
			AL Jafarah

Source: <http://gpco.gov.ly/home.php>

Libya is considered to be a sparsely populated country relative to its land area. Most of the Libyan population is concentrated in the north, particularly in the two largest cities of Tripoli and Benghazi. The population density of Libya is around 80 people per square mile in the north and the major cities. The percentage falls to just 1.6 per square mile in the south and rural areas. Ninety percent of the population live in less than 10 per cent of the land area, primarily along the coast.

The Libyan people are primarily a mixture of Arabs and Berbers with little distinction remaining between these two groups, along with small Tabou and Touareg tribal groups in southern Libya. Sunni Islam is the predominant religion in Libya. Libya is economically highly reliant on oil which accounts for 95 per cent of foreign exchange earnings.

Libya has been conquered by all of the empires which have existed in the Mediterranean region, including the Phoenicians, Greeks, Romans, Vandals and the Spanish. The Roman and Greek ruins in particular, such as at Leptis and Sabratha, still attract many tourists from across the world. Libya adopted Islam and the Arabic language in the seventh century when Arab Muslims conquered North Africa. The Ottoman Turks conquered Libya in the sixteenth century and Libya became part of the Ottoman Empire until 1911 when Italian forces occupied the country.

Although Italian imperialism was by no means a cultural imperialism, it profoundly affected Libyan culture and identity. The Italian language is still widely used and many Italian words have become incorporated into the Libyan dialect up to the present day. Libyan civil law is based on Italian as well as Islamic legislation. The Italian occupation of Libya has shaped many Libyan characteristics in the western Arab region which had also been occupied by the French, thus leading French culture to dominate this region. The Berber language is used in some Libyan regions such as Zowara, Naloth, and Kabaw, but the native language is Arabic and this is used in the education system as well as English. The British and French colonised Libya after the Second World War and the defeat of the Italian and German armies at the battle of El-Alamein in October 1942. The British then controlled the north and east of Libya which were then called the provinces of Tripoli and Benghazi whereas the French controlled the south, or the province of Fezzan.

On December 24th 1951 Libya achieved its independence, being one of the first nations to obtain independence through the United Nations. King Idris, who was favoured by the British, became the King of a united Libya until 1969, when the Libyan Army under the leadership of Colonel Qadhafi spearheaded a revolution which removed King Idris from the throne. The new regime established a system ruled by the Revolutionary Command Council (RCC) headed by Muammmar Al-Qadhafi. In fact the RCC was influenced by the Egyptian Gamal Abed el Nasser. Nasser led a military coup in Egypt in 1952 and was the head of the RCC there. Nasserism in very basic terms involves hostility toward imperialism and Zionism. It also supports the unification of Arab nations as well as socialist economic policy.

The Libyan Political System

On 2nd March 1977 Qadhafi disbanded the republican political system and established a new era of the 'Authority of the people', renaming the state the 'Jamahiriya'. Since then, have been renamed the name of the Libyan state, its embassies and ministries and even the calendar. Libya became the 'Socialist People's Libyan Arab Jamahiriya'. The 'Jamahiriya' has no official translation, but unofficially has been translated as the 'people's authority' or the 'state of the masses'. The Libyan embassies are now called 'people's bureau' Libya has its own calendar in which the months take their names from Libyan culture or history.

The political system in Libya is quite unique and unprecedented, in that Libya is the only nation in the whole world which does not have either a president or a constitution. According to its new political system, the Libyan people run their own country via congress. As Vandewalle (2006) pointed out, "The *Green Book* contains the essential idea of statelessness, and of people managing their own affairs without state institutions. There is, as well, an emphasis on consultation and equality, and an

explicitly voiced aversion to hierarchy and to the handing over of authority to state functionaries. There is, finally, repeated insistence on ‘direct democracy’ thought which citizens will take control of the state” (Vandewalle, 2006, p103).

The political system in Libya is based on the first parts of Qadhafi’s *Green Book*, which contains a compilation of his perspectives on what Libya’s social, political, and economic organisation should look like. *The Green Book* is divided into three parts. The first volume, which appeared in August 1975, concerns the problem of democracy, the second part offers solutions to economic problems; and the third part covers social issues. Qadhafi considers his *Green Book* to embody the third universal theory, after of those capitalism and socialism.

Part one of the *Green Book* provides a framework for the political system and its formation. First, the people are divided into Basic Popular Conferences. Each Basic Popular Conference chooses its secretariat. The secretariats of all Popular Conferences together form Non-basic Popular Conferences. Subsequently, the masses of the Basic Popular Conferences select administrative People’s Committees to replace government administration. All public institutions are run by People’s Committees which are accountable to the Basic Popular Conferences which dictate policy and supervise its execution. Thus, both administration and supervision are conducted by the people and the outdated definition of democracy as the supervision of the government by the people - becomes obsolete. “It will be replaced by the true definition: Democracy is the supervision of the people by the people” (Qadhafi, 2005, p18).

According to El-Fathaly and Palmer (1980), the Green Book organized Libya into three levels of popular self-management: the zone level, the municipality (and branch municipality) level, and the national level. Under this three-tier system, the members of

each zone meet and elect a popular committee to administer their affairs. Libya is divided into 32 municipalities. Each municipality or branch contains firstly a legislative assembly, referred to as the basic people's congress and secondly, an administrative committee referred to as the branch popular committee (or municipal popular committee in the smaller cities where there are no branches). The number of municipalities varies from time to time. The basic people's congress is designed to serve as the legislative body at the branch-municipality level. Its membership consists of all residents of the branch. The basic people's congress meets quarterly to make recommendations and discuss local affairs as well as to elect its chairman, selecting five members to serve on the branch popular committee (El-Fathaly & Palmer, 1980, p140).

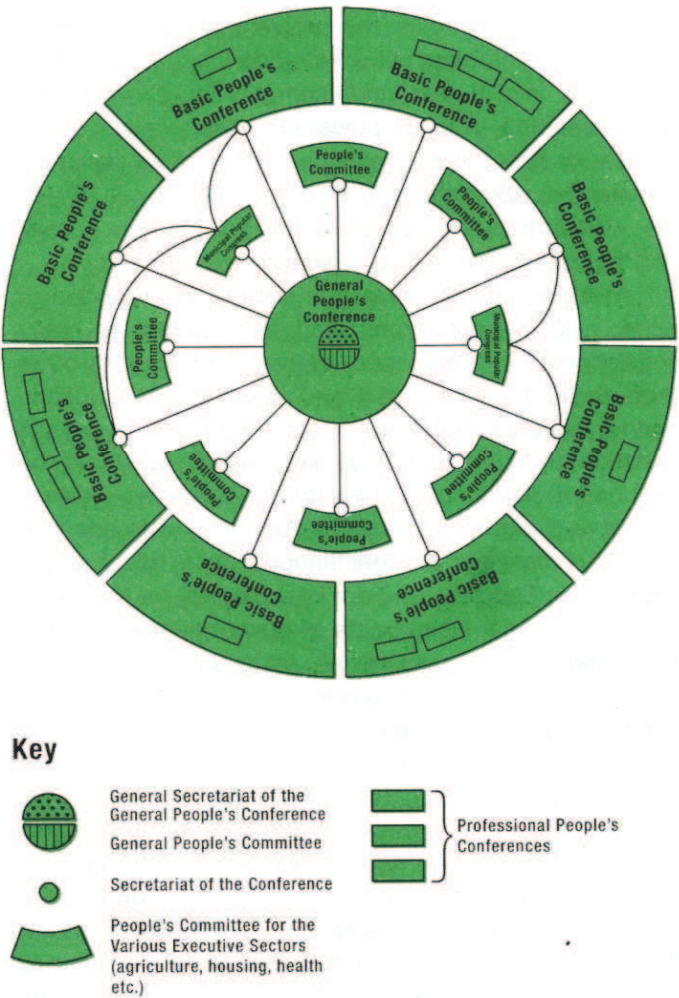
The branch popular committee is considered as the administrative arm of the basic people's congress responsible for the implementation of its decrees. It executes the decisions of the basic people's congress and the decisions of the General People's Congress as they relate to the branch or municipality. The General People's Congress works as a pool for the decisions and recommendations which come from the basic people's congresses. These decisions and recommendations are divided into two basic categories: those regarding national affairs and policies, which are referred to the General Popular Committee; and local decisions and recommendations which concern the basic congresses and should be referred to the popular committee in the relevant branch or municipality.

Political parties are forbidden and are considered as a contemporary instrument of dictatorship. "The party is not a democratic instrument at all because it is composed of people who have common interests, a common outlook or a common culture; or who belong to the same locality or have the same belief. They form a party to achieve their

ends, impose their belief on society as a whole. A party's aim is to achieve power under the pretext of carrying out its programme" (Qadhafi, 2005, p11).

Figure 2 - The Libyan political system

The authority of the people



Source (Qadhafi, 2005, p19)

Under Libyan socialism the state should control every economic and trade activity. According to the Green Book, "Economic activity in the new socialist society is productive activity for the satisfaction of material needs. It is not unproductive activity

or an activity which seeks profit in order, after satisfying material needs, to save the surplus. That is impossible under the rules of the new socialism” (Qadhafi, 2005, p40).

On the other hand individuals have the rights to establish their own businesses under the condition that their productions will solely meet and fulfil only their needs. As the Green Book argues, “The legitimate purpose of the individual’s economic activity is solely to satisfy his needs. For the wealth of the world has a limit at each stage as does the wealth of each individual society. Therefore no individual has the right to carry out economic activity in order to acquire more of that wealth than is necessary to satisfy his needs ... To allow private production for the purpose of acquiring savings that exceed the satisfaction of needs is exploitation itself, as in permitting the use of others to satisfy your own needs or to get more than your own needs. This can be done by exploiting a person to satisfy the needs of others and making savings for others at the expense of his needs” (Qadhafi, 2005, p40).

However, by the end of the 1980s, Libya made a U-turn and abandoned socialism particularly in the field of trade and small enterprises. It has since taken impressive steps toward privatisation and liberalization. According to Vandewalle (2006), “Libya embarked upon its own *infitah* (liberalization) in two distinct waves: a first attempt between 1987 and 1990, followed by a second set of initiatives after 1990. The overall objectives were to reduce state involvement in the country’s economy, and to promote greater efficiency by concentrating on two distinct goals. These consisted of encouraging private sector initiatives in all economic sectors except heavy industry, and of achieving significant cuts in state spending, in part by reducing the country’s traditional heavy outlay for subsidies in all sectors” (Vandewalle, 2006, p163).

Libyan society is based on basic units of the extended family, clan, tribe and village, with some modifications of this arrangement in urban centres, and particularly in Tripoli

and Benghazi. Libyan society shares many characteristics with other Arab societies, particularly in its traditions and the influence of the family. According to Obeidi (2001), "Libyan society, like many other Arab societies, is based on traditional identifications such as family, tribe, religion, and city. For instance, when meeting for the first time there are certain questions people usually ask: *lia'l ai'la* [Which tribe do you belong to?]. There are also phrases like *wald-bint'ai'la* [I am a son-daughter of a specific family], or *ana min qabila...* [I belong to the tribe of...]. There are also ties with particular localities. In such a society the deeds of individuals bring collective fame or shame to the family and tribe. Hence the good or bad reputation of a family or tribe crucially influences the lives of individuals socially, politically and economically. The clan or tribe can interfere even at a personal level, such as in decisions about marriage, especially for females" (Obeidi, 2001, p87).

Libyan Foreign Affairs

The Libyan regime adopted new policies toward Arab issues and imitated Nasserism in that the liberation of Palestine and the unification of Arab countries became priorities in its foreign policy. Since the early days of the establishment of the Libyan government relations with the West have taken several U-turns. The Libyan government asked the British and Americans to withdraw their military installations in the mid nineteen seventies. The British military installations at Tobruk and El Adem as well as the American military base in Tripoli were then closed.

Libya's relationship with the Arab world has also been a highly controversial issue, particularly in the 1980s, when the Arab region witnessed many conflicts such as the Iraq-Iran war, the Lebanon civil war and Lebanon's war with Israel, and the Moroccan war against the Western Sahara independence movement. The Libyan government was involved in all of these conflicts using its wealth to serve its policy. During the Iraq-

Iran war (1980-1988) Libya backed Iran, which was considered by many Arabs as a betrayal of the principles of Arab nationalism. Libya also funded the war in Western Sahara and provided Western Sahara's independence movement with military equipment, training and experts in order to win its war against Morocco. Libya was also involved in the Arab conflict with Israel since the early years of the new Libyan regime, which supported the Palestinian movements. Libya also backed many Lebanese militias during the war against Israel in the 1980s and developed close relationships with Syria and Iran.

Libyan policy caused friction with some European countries, and also with the U.S. Since the early 1970s Libya made it clear that it would support all liberation movements across the world to achieve their legitimate rights of freedom from imperialism. Libya supported and was involved in many international conflicts including its support of the Pan African Congress in South Africa, and the Irish Republican Army in the United Kingdom. This action was considered by many European countries as a sign of hostility, whereas Libya considered its policy was a way of protecting itself from imperialism and the new colonialism both regionally and globally.

In fact, the Cold War and the conflict between the Eastern and Western blocs provided an ideal atmosphere for Libyan policy until the collapse of the Soviet Union, when the whole world witnessed the onset of a new climate. The Libyans' strong ties with Iran, Syria and the Palestinians created many difficulties for the Libyan government, particularly after the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991. Libya's relationship with America had deteriorated since the early days of the Libyan regime when the government decided to expel the British and American from their military bases in 1970. In fact due to the adoption of hostile policy towards the West, and the Americans

in particular, the relationship between America and Libya went from bad to worse until it reached the point of military confrontation during the 1980s.

In August 1981 the United States conducted a series of naval war games inside the Libyan 120-mile maritime limit. The American Air Force then shot down two Libyan Air Force planes about 60 miles off the Libyan coast in the Gulf of Sidra. On April 15, 1986, the American Air Force bombed Tripoli and Benghazi, killing more than 100 people as retaliation for a bomb explosion at the La Belle disco in West Berlin on April 5, 1986, which killed three people, two of whom were American, and wounded 229 others. A few years later, on December 21, 1988, a bomb exploded on the 103 Pan Am flight over Lockerbie in Scotland. The explosion killed 270 people from 20 countries and led to an international crisis which became known as the Lockerbie crisis.

The Lockerbie Crisis

Soon after the Lockerbie disaster, some politicians and experts accused Iran as the main architect of this vindictive act toward the Americans who had mistakenly shot down an Iranian Airbus over the Persian Gulf, killing 290 passengers in July 1988. According to Dixon (2001), Iran, Syria or the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine could have been responsible for Lockerbie (Dixon, 2001). However, Scotland charged two Libyan intelligence officers with responsibility for the incident at Lockerbie and urged the Libyan government to surrender them to face charges of murder, conspiracy and contravention of the Aviation Security Act (Boyd-Judson, 2005). Subsequently, the first war against Iraq in 1991 was an ideal chance for Syria and Iran to bargain with the U.S. In fact, Syria joined the coalition in their war against Iraq and Iran implicitly approved through its silence. As a result, the American and the British governments claimed in November 1991 that there was no evidence of the

involvement of any other country in the Lockerbie incident, and they urged Libya to surrender its two citizens for trial in Scotland. Libya refused the allegations and in March 1992 faced international sanctions imposed by the United Nations Security Council. The Security Council's resolution 748 imposed arms and air embargo and the expulsion of Libyan diplomatic personnel serving abroad as well as a ban on the provision of oil industry equipment.

On April 5th 1999, after long negotiations, Libya accepted responsibility for Lockerbie and handed over the two suspects to face trial in the Netherlands. Libya also agreed to pay up to \$2.7 billion in compensation to the bereaved families. On September 12, 2003, the UN Security Council formally lifted sanctions against Libya (Boyd-Judson, 2005, p91). The seven years of sanctions had a profound impact on the Libyan economy and health services as well as isolating the country for almost a decade.

Since 2000, Libya has turned its face towards Africa and opened its borders to its people. In fact, this policy has itself had serious consequences both domestically and internationally. Thousands of African people have entered Libya seeking jobs or emigration to Europe. African immigrants in Libya have exacerbated social problems such as crime, fraud, and drugs as well as causing difficulties for the health services and job availability. As a consequence, a clash occurred in October 2000 when 150 African workers were killed by Libyan mobs. On the other hand Libya and Tunisia have become favoured departure points for thousands of Africans who cross the Mediterranean Sea in so called 'death boats' seeking a better life in Europe.

The repeated occurrences of the capture or death of illegal immigrants in the Mediterranean Sea have created global concern and forced all European states to work collectively alongside North African nations in order to curb the flow of immigrants toward Europe. In order to avoid further confrontation with the West and

seeking full integration in to international society, Libya announced on December 19, 2003 that it would dismantle its weapons of mass destruction (WMD). “Further, Libya would eliminate all chemical weapons stocks and munitions and accede to the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) and allow immediate inspections and monitoring to verify these actions. In December 2003, Libya also agreed to abide by the Missile Technology Control Regime (MTCR) guidelines, and signed the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty” (Sharon, 2007).

Qadhafi’s son, Saif Aleslam is currently spearheading a new policy for political and economical reform as well as work on human rights issues, which may lead to the establishment of a new epoch in Libyan history. Libya now seeks full integration into international society and more liberalization in its trade as well as implementing new measures to attract foreign investment., Saif Aleslam has also strongly criticised Libyan media performance and has argued for a reformation of the Libyan media.

Conclusion

This chapter has provided a general introduction to the subjects covered in the thesis and cast light on the inequalities regarding the flow of news and information from core countries to peripheral countries which is reinforced by the new technology of satellite channels.

The chapter has also provided general background information about Libya’s history, geography, and population. It also explores the Libyan political system and the country’s relationship with the West, focussing on the Lockerbie crisis which had a profound impact on the Libyan political and economic relationships with Europe in particular. By dealing with these aspects this chapter has achieved two main goals. The first is to provide a general background to Libya as a subject of study, and the

second is to cover important factors which must be taken into consideration. The disruption of the population and the geographical nature of Libya are factors that should be considered when analyzing the performance of the Libyan media. This could help to clarify the reasons behind the difficulties that face the Libyan media.

The chapter has also explored the limitations of the study as well as its ultimate aims. The methods and procedures used in the study have been briefly described in this chapter along with the reasons for choosing this subject and the contribution of the research in the field of media studies.

CHAPTER TWO

THE UNEQUAL FLOW OF NEWS

Introduction

This chapter casts light on the core countries' domination in the field of the media. It deals in particular with the nature of this phenomenon, its roots and apparatus, as well as existing debates over this issue with special reference to Tomlinson (1991) Schiller (1996), Webster (2002), Harvey (2003) and Arrighi (2005). This chapter also discusses terms such as hegemony, domination, and cultural imperialism. Schiller's (1996) analysis of political economy is useful in describing the disparities between core and peripheral countries and global and domestic inequalities. This analyse is and is based on the ownership and control of media products and the way in which television programmes, advertisements, and news are produced and distributed.

The chapter focuses on recent controversies over news coverage, referring in particular to Schudson (1995), Festus (1999), and Boyd (2000), while also casting light on the roots of the domination of major news agencies across the world. In fact, the monopoly of news coverage was the first controversial issue in the field of media, as the major news agencies divided the world between themselves, and people throughout the world started to read and listen to news from the major news agencies' perspectives. The chapter deals with the cultural approach which became the central aspect discussions in small countries discussion concerning the unfair coverage of news by the major news agencies. Here, cultural aspects could create misinterpretations due to cultural differences, an issue considered first by Stuart Hall (2001).

The chapter focuses on current major news agencies such as Reuters, IFP and the Associated Press. The chapter also deals with the alternatives used by different nations in order to compete with these major news agencies and to combat their

monopoly of news coverage. The small nations' experience of the monopoly of news is referred to as the 'New World Order' in the field of media.

Literature Review

Nowadays, the appeal of the discourse of a new information order, which was adopted by the UN General Assembly in 1974 as an alternative to the one-way flow of news and information from core countries to the rest of the world, seems to be very outdated. The changes which occurred after the collapse of the Soviet Union and the Eastern Bloc were a turning point for peripheral countries. Globalisation has weakened the autonomous power of the majority of nations. Nowadays, peripheral countries face new challenges which differ from those faced in the 1980s when the new world order came into being. As Schiller (1998) suggests, the term "globalisation is a misleading term, giving a false impression that everything has become globalised". In fact, the term is suggestive of diversity and democracy, two aspects which are scarce in the reality of globalisation. Globalisation in reality is based on domination: "a system whereby one picture of the world is systematically preferred over others" (Gitlin, 2003, p257). The global market is basically anti-democratic: "the global market economy has a starkly antidemocratic edge if by democratic we mean that/or most people have choice or influence over the central political and economic decisions affecting them" (Herman, and McChesney, 1997, p31).

Core countries, and particularly the United States, seek to maintain a global market by controlling the flow of information as a part of a strategy gradually established over the past decades. This dominance forces peripheral countries to yield to this impinging flow of information. We can see how the nations subjected to this react toward the new world order and UNESCO. "What all of this reveals, including the silence over what happened, is a really profound fear that that control over doctrine and information

might escape the hands of those who are powerful if it gets into the hands of other people. We are in trouble. And they understand that. UNESCO was practically destroyed because of this. In fact, the U.S was trying to undermine the UN, and that is probably why it doesn't pay its dues because it is no longer a useful instrument of power" (Barsamian and Chomsky, 2001, pp 40-41).

We must analyse this issue from different political, economic and cultural perspectives in order to trace its historical roots. To understand this phenomenon within the mass media we must also approach this subject from varying perspectives. "It is clear that the mass media are constantly and rapidly expanding in terms of technical power and penetration, coverage and representation of both public and private life in the West" (Tomlinson, 1991, p22).

The mass media, could be seen as the most clear reference point of modern western capitalism. As Tomlinson argues "It is tempting to see the media as the central cultural reference point of modern western capitalism. If this is so then cultural imperialism might be seen to centre on the media in two ways: either as the dominance of one culture's media (text, practices) over another; or as the global spread of 'mass-mediated culture' as such" (Tomlinson, 1991, p22), Tomlinson argues that the term 'imperialism' is more appropriate in describing this relationship. "Imperialism grasps specific forms of domination that are associated with 'empire'. So, in the case of cultural imperialism in the third world, this term might point towards the links between present domination and a colonial past" (Tomlinson, 1991, p19).

Tomlinson seems to partly concur with Schiller's point regarding the phenomena of inequality in terms of its historic roots (Schiller, 1996, p96). When tracing this phenomenon, we find that the neo-Marxists prefer the term 'cultural imperialism' because they adopt a more holistic view of the role of the media, seeing them as

necessarily implicated in a larger totality of domination (Tomlinson, 1991, p20). On the other hand, non-Marxists or pluralists prefer the term 'media imperialism' in trying to keep focus on the media (Tomlinson, 1991, p21). Tomlinson argues that domination and imperialism are interwoven. "The notion of 'domination' is essential to the notion of imperialism: thus to speak of media imperialism is to understand a priori context of domination" (Tomlinson, 1991, p21). Both imperialism and domination contain the negativity marked in notions of power, domination, or control (Tomlinson, 1991, p20). Gramsci's definition of domination is more specific and profound as he places an emphasis on persuasion and coercion. "Hegemony is a ruling class's (or alliance's) domination of subordinate classes and groups through the elaboration and penetration of ideology (idea and assumptions) into their common sense and everyday practice; it is the systematic (but not necessarily or even usually deliberate) engineering of mass consent to the established order. No hard fast line can be drawn between the mechanisms of hegemony and the mechanisms of coercion: the hold of hegemony rests on elements of coercion, just as the force of coercion over the dominated both presupposes and reinforces elements of hegemony. In any given society, hegemony and coercion are interwoven" (Gitlin, 2003, p253).

Miller's, (1987) definition of Domination is that it "indicates a particular mode of operation of power ... it is a mode of acting upon individuals or groups of individuals directly counter to their aspiration or demands. It is a phenomenon we witness often in the home, the school, the workplace, and at national and international state levels" (Miller, 1987, p2). Miller distinguishes between domination and power and how they operate. According to Miller, "power operates through the promotion of subjectivity and is more resourceful. It is not limited to seeking to deny and to challenge, but attempts to invest the individual with a series of personal objectives and ambitions. Power in this respect is a more intimate phenomenon. It knows the individual better, it does not

act on individuals at distance and from the outside. It acts on the interior of the person, through their self" (Miller, 1987, p2).

Gramsci's concept of hegemony is that "a class and its representatives exercise power over subordinate classes by means of a combination of coercion and persuasion" (Simon, 1991, p22). Gramsci distinguished between hegemony which usually contains consent and domination which based on force. According to Buchanan (2000) "Gramsci held that domination was the opposite of hegemony, for it is rule by force and acquiescence rather than ideological leadership and consent. Rather than an elite imposition, hegemony is based on the willing and active acceptance of elite leadership and values by subordinate group" (Buchanan, 2000, p106). Gramsci argues "The supremacy of a social group manifested itself in two ways, as "domination" and as "intellectual and moral leadership". A social group dominates antagonistic groups, which it tends to "liquidate", or to subjugate perhaps even by armed force; it leads kindred and allied groups" (Gramsci, 2003, p57).

Taking Gramsci's argument to the international level is quite challenging particularly when we take into account that many aspects in Gramsci's theories are not as clear as in the state level. This includes the ruling class, the historic block and civil society. On the other hand there are many features in the current international order where Gramsci's theory could be employed. Gramsci's theory of hegemony could be useful in analyzing the gap between core countries and peripherals and also the mechanisms of capitalism in the international economy system. Hegemony in the international level is "an order within a world economy with a dominant mode of production which penetrates into all countries and links into other subordinate modes of production. It is also a complex of international social relationships which connect the social classes of the different countries" (Cox, 1993, p62).

In fact global capitalism has been reinforced by globalisation whereby just unite in a global system which is run and controlled by a handful players. Robinson argues that globalisation is “a new stage in the history of world capitalism involving the integration of national and regional economies into a new global production and financial system and such related processes as transnational class formation” (Robinson,2005,p5). Globalisation as a system has created an ideal atmosphere of new coalitions between ruling classes at the international level. Robinson argues that “what most accounts of global class formation share is a nation-state centred concept of class that postulates national capitalist classes that converge externally with other national classes at the level of the international system through the internationalisation of capital and concomitantly of civil society. World ruling class formation in the age of globalisation is seen as the international collusion of these national bourgeoisies and their resultant international coalition” (Robinson, 2005, p5). According to Gramsci in order to maintain its hegemonic role the ruling class should be able to create coalitions with other classes and ensure its moral and intellectual leadership. “In modern conditions, argues Gramsci, a class maintain its dominance not simply through a special organization of force, but because it is able to go beyond its narrow, corporative interests, exert a moral and intellectual leadership, and make compromises, within certain limits, with a variety of allies who are unified in a social bloc of force which Gramsci calls the historic bloc” (Robinson, 2005, p6).

Hegemony in the international level also has its mechanism and institutions where particular norms and rules of behaviour are imposed on states. According to Cox (1993) international organisations Function as apparatus in order to develop the hegemony and ideology of core countries in particular. The ultimate aim of these international organisations is to achieve particular objective; “(1) they employed the rules which facilitate the expansion of hegemonic world orders;(2) the are themselves the product of the hegemonic world order;(3) they ideologically legitimate the norms of

the world order;(4) they co-opt the elites from peripheral countries and (5) they absorb counter-hegemonic ideas” (Cox,1993,p62).

Core countries particularly America try to impose an international system with certain norms regarding the global market system and free trade. In the long run the principles and mechanisms of free market will serve the interest of core countries at the expense of peripherals. As Katz put it, “Hegemony at the global level is produced by dominant mode of production which is forwarded by dominant states and institutions and permeates other states and institutions” (Katz, 2006, p336).

Gramsci argues that hegemony and counter-hegemony are interwoven. Each of them stipulates the existence of the other. “Hegemony necessitates counter-hegemony- hegemony and counter-hegemony are best seen as ‘simultaneous double movements’ that reciprocally shape one another- hegemony in forms counter-hegemony, and counter-hegemonic efforts cause hegemonic forces to realign and reorganize themselves”(Katz,2006,p336).

According to Cox (1993) a counter-hegemony strategy is a radical change on the international level and would be difficult and any change should start from national level (Cox, 1993, p64).

Thus civil society is the sphere for counter-hegemony where the seeds of any international change should be planted. “Civil society is the sphere of class struggles and of popular-democratic struggles. Thus it is the sphere in which a dominant social group organises consent and hegemony. It is also the sphere where the subordinate social groups may organise their opposition and construct alternative hegemony- a counter-hegemony” (Simon, 1991, p27). Civil society is the place where the subordinates groups organize themselves and establish counter-hegemony (Katz,

2006, p336). Civil society is also “presented as a reformist force that will develop into global movement, put right the inequalities inherent in the global governance system, and tame and humanize globalisation. Civil society also the ideal place for *Globalisation from Below* and where alternative ideologies grow (Katz, 2006, p334).

The peripheral countries managed in several occasions to use international originations on their own advantages. In UNESCO for example peripheral countries managed to reach consensus and established plan for New World Information and Communications Order (NWICO) chapter two will deal with this issue in more details. However counter- hegemony needs establishment of coalition in order to create the historic bloc. “For a historic bloc to be effective it needs to be a coalition of forces, that dose not duplicate power disparities inherent in the existing world-system, that avoids localism or nationalism, and promotes global solidarity trough networking that links the local and the global a unifying , non-homogenising, and indigenizing strategy of resistance” (Katz,2006,p337).

We may conclude here that for peripheral countries to establish counter-hegemony there are two main tiers which could provide space for counter-hegemony. The first is the civil society in each individual state which provides the atmosphere for consciousness to grow .the practice of democracy here is crucial for healthy debate. In such practice of democracy and debates common awareness and consciousness will naturally grow and developed to the international level. The second is collective efforts whereby peripheral countries could create solid form of resistance and take the counter-hegemony practice to regional and international level. Arab regional is good example to such argument. In fact globalisation provides ideal atmosphere for Arab Countries to take utilise satellites technologies and establish a competitive news outlets.

It is true that many Arab countries are still reluctant to adopt such a policy. However, one of the aims of this study is to examine the significance of Arab satellite channels offered to Arab audiences as a source of news. This will cast light on such issue and evaluate the contribution of the establishment of regional alternatives to core countries' news outlets. Arab collective regional efforts and national alternatives to core country media hegemony is a good example for such argument.

The relationship between core and peripheral countries seems to reflect Gramsci's definition of domination. Domination uses two methods of consent when it comes to emulation or cultural exportation and coercion when it concerns the military invasion of peripheral countries such as Afghanistan and Iraq. However, Tomlinson prefers to use the term 'cultural imperialism'. "It may be argued that 'imperialism' grasps a specific form of domination that is associated with 'empire'. So, in the case of cultural imperialism in the third world, this term might point towards the links between present domination and a colonial past" (Tomlinson, 1991, p19). The term 'imperialism' is itself widely used, but most generally as "an extension or imposition of the power, authority or influence of state over other states, or stateless communities" (Arrighi, 2005, p27). According to Fejes (1981), differentiating cultural from economic imperialism is achieved by analysing the "content of media texts, the reception of this content, and the impact of the reception, on the lives and human relationships of third world populations. This is the cultural dimension of the media" (Fejes, 1981, p287).

Discourse over imperialism as a global phenomenon began as early as Hobson's book *Imperialism* (1988) first published in 1902, which analyses the economic roots of imperialism and the maldistribution of wealth. However, imperialism as a term and theory is usually linked to Lenin, particularly in Marxist discourses. Lenin defined imperialism as the highest stage of capitalism: "Imperialism is capitalism at that stage of development at which the dominance of monopolies and finance capital is

established; in which the export of capital has acquired pronounced importance; in which the division of the world among the international trusts has begun; in which the division of all territories of the globe among the biggest capitalist powers has been completed” (Lenin, 1964, pp266-267). However, this study focuses on cultural imperialism rather than the broad discourse on imperialism as a political and economical phenomenon, which references in particular Tomlinson (1991), Said (1994), Schiller (1996, 2001), Harvey (2003) and Arrighi (2005).

Said (1994) argued that imperialism means the practice, the theory, and the attitudes of a dominating metropolitan centre ruling a distant territory. He considered imperialism and colonialism to be firmly interwoven. “Colonialism, which is almost always a consequence of imperialism, is the implanting of settlements on distant territory” (Said, 1994, p8). Said also referred to Michael Doyle’s definition of imperialism which seems to concur with Tomlinson’s: “Empire is a relationship, formal or informal, in which one state controls the effective political sovereignty of another political society. It can be achieved by force, by political collaboration, by economic, social, or cultural dependence. Imperialism is simply the process or policy of establishing or maintaining an empire” (Said, 1994, p8).

It’s true that the nineteenth-century form of imperialism is over and the colonial powers such as France and Britain gave up their possessions after World War Two. However the imperial past is entrenched in the colonised societies as Said (1994) pointed out: “Although that era clearly had an identity all its own, the meaning of imperial past is not totally contained within it, but has entered the reality of hundreds of millions of people, where its existence as shared memory and as a highly conflictual texture of culture, ideology, and policy still exercises tremendous force” (Said, 1994, p11).

Other perspectives useful in this study include Schiller's (1996, 1997, 1998) analysis which considers the political economy. This is based on the ownership and control of the media world wide especially in the manner in which media products such as television programmes, advertisements, and news are produced and distributed and particularly the market dominance of the powerful multinational corporations (Tomlinson, 1991, p36). Schiller's (1996) analysis is useful in describing the disparities between core and peripheral countries and global and domestic inequalities. Schiller describes the 'modern world system' as consisting of a global capitalist market economy in which the 'core' countries dominate the allocation of human and natural resources and the 'periphery' remains at a disadvantage in terms of economic, technological, strategic and political power.

The fundamental point is that these countries do not have control over their economies (Tomlinson, 1991, p37). Webster condenses Schiller's contentions into three main points. The first element of the argument is Schiller's belief that information today is treated as a commodity; it is increasingly bought and sold. The second argument insists that class inequalities are a major force in the distribution of access to and capacity to generate information. The third part of the argument is that contemporary capitalism is one dominated by corporate institutions which have particular characteristics. The present society which is undergoing such momentous changes in the area of information and communication is one of corporate capitalism (Webster, 2002, p128). The three elements which Webster refers to as the features of capitalism and they are strongly interwoven.

The gap between the core and peripheral countries seems to have widened due to the mechanisms of the global market. Open and free markets seem fair and convincing slogans but, in reality, these mechanisms empower the powerful and weaken the weak. "The distance between the incomes of the richest and poorest countries was

about 3 to 1 in 1820, 35 to 1 in 1950, 44 to 1 in 1973 and 72 to 1 in 1992” (Sklair, 2002, p48). In this atmosphere, where the gap is tremendously wide between poor countries and prosperous countries the phenomenon of corporations as global players has flourished. This new phenomenon started to occur in the 1970s and since then increasing wealth, power and influence has accrued to relatively small numbers of companies in the world. “In the mid-1970s, eight companies shared 30 per cent of the global oil market, seven companies shared 25 per cent of the global copper market, and in their respective global markets six bauxite companies shared 58 per cent, seven iron ore companies shared 50 per cent, and a few tea, coffee, banana, and tobacco companies shared 60 per cent of their markets” (Sklair, 2002, p63). This gap in wealth has effects in other social and cultural sectors. Poor countries will simply find it hard to cope with their people’s basic needs, and the world has witnessed many examples of this in terms of food shortages or pandemic diseases. The gap is also clear in terms of information access between core and peripheral countries. “In 1998, North America had 168 times more Internet hosts than Africa, and Africa had 396 times more people per host than North America” (Sklair,2002,p52). By the 1990s the number of major corporate merger reached unprecedented levels and this phenomenon has continued in the new century (Sklair, 2002, p65). “Most of these mergers and acquisitions are within sectors, notably in the oil, telecommunications, and financial service industries, but some significant cross-sector activity has occurred. Since 1990 the world of media has been dominated by a small group of globalising conglomerates with interests in a variety of business sectors” (Sklair, 2002, p65). This phenomenon of merger seems to have created a handful of major global players which, on the one hand, eliminate diversity and competition and on the other hand make it difficult for peripheral countries to find alternatives or to compete with these powerful companies (Appendix C). For example, the internet company AOL and the entertainment company Time-Warner merged and created a huge global media firm for both content and delivery (Sklair, 2002, p65). This is a highly significant

issue in terms of the mass media where, theoretically, people should have the right to make choices. Having only a few news outlets or other media products for example, will be at the expense of the principles of democracy and the nature of the free market where competition and diversity should flourish.

Another concern which has also arisen as a result of the power of large corporations is their influence on political relations nationally and internationally. In fact the international arena has witnessed many examples where corporations play a crucial role and have changed many political circumstances. Even though these corporations are usually categorized as part of the private sector or merely business enterprises yet they remain a significant political player in international relations.

During the international campaign which was waged against the South African apartheid regime, companies from Europe and the USA worked with a variety of political tactics in order to force the abandonment of discrimination and racism and brutality against black people. International pressure and the boycott of the South African apartheid regime created financial and other economic problems for the regime which led to full compliance with the international community's demands. South Africa since then has taken a different course based on human rights, racial equality and free elections (Sklair, 2002, p119). This example illustrates the impact of the connection between governments and corporations. Unfortunately this influence is not always used fairly and for good objectives. The economic embargo on Libya discussed in the previous chapter is a good example of this. The main point here is that corporations have an influence on global political relations, and sometimes serve the political agendas of certain nations. Due to their hostility towards American foreign policy, for example, Sudan and Iran are subject to sanctions.

The point here is that strong relationships between corporations and governments, political decision makers and company policy exist and many governments want to reinforce them (Sklair, 2002, p72).

The fruit of these relationships between governments and corporations can be made clearer when focusing on the media corporations. These informational corporations have dominated the global market enabling them to gain profit and influence. The logic of market forces and profit seeking will direct information to high income individuals. "A privately constructed and owned electronic information system of necessity will embody the fundamental features of a private enterprise economy: inequality of income along with the production of goods and services for profit. As production and sales are inseparably connected to income, the overall economy is directed by the logic of market force, to producing for, and seeking, those with the most income" (Schiller, 1996, p96). Schiller argues that the major corporations have directed and organized the global economy. "The launching of the global information highway project comes at a time when most, if not all, of the preconditions for corporate global 'order' is in place. There is first the actual existence of the global economy, organized and directed by a relatively tiny number of global (transnational) corporations. These few mega firms have grown in size and scope and become the major force in greatly influencing nation states" (Schiller, 1996, p94). In fact, corporate capitalism has grown in size and scope and as Schiller warns, it has created what might be called a transnational empire (Webster, 2002, p129).

Media moguls could be considered as a good example of the policy which is motivated by profit rather than run with the principles of democracy. "A media mogul is defined here as a person who owns and operates major media properties, who takes entrepreneurial risks, and who conducts these media businesses in a personal and idiosyncratic style" (Tunstall, 2008, p44). In fact the influence of moguls over political

parties and government policy could weaken the effectiveness and performance of many political apparatus.

Rupert Murdoch uses a simple policy which Tunstall (2008) calls 'charm first and frighten later' to achieve his aims (Tunstall, 2008, p54). Murdoch has used his media outlets to wield a great deal of influence over Britain's political system. According to Tunstall (2008), "many politicians received Murdoch press praise, and subsequently maintain a frozen silence as they experienced the dreaded and humiliating tabloid denunciation" (Tunstall, 2008, pp54-55).

Tunstall (2008) argues that "Murdoch backed Margret Thatcher for 15 years during her tenure in opposition and also during her time as Prime Minister 1975-1990" (Tunstall, 2008, p55). In return Thatcher "...used U.K. opposition leader and then Prime ministerial 'presidential' power to give Murdoch several astonishing (and apparently illegal) commercial boosts. First Thatcher waived the monopoly rules to allow Murdoch to acquire *The Times* and *Sunday Times* (in 1981) and *Today* (in 1987). Second, Thatcher provided advance help (trade union legislation and the provision of massive London police numbers) for Murdoch's strike-breaking move to new technology and the new Wapping printing plant in 1986. Third, Mrs Thatcher also 'looked the other way' as Murdoch in 1990 merged with the regulated and official service to establish BSkyB as the U.K satellite TV monopolist" (Tunstall, 2008, p55).

According to Hertz (2001), Murdoch backed Tony Blair even before the general election in 1997 which was won by Labour and put Blair in power. Only one week before that election the *Sun* made a historic shift and decided to tell its 40 million readers in U.K. that it backed Blair (Hertz, 2001, p133). Even though Blair denied any deal with Murdoch it was clear that Murdoch had received a confirmation that no

restriction would be imposed on cross-media ownership which would affect his business and influence (Hertz, 2001, p133).

In Italy, the media mogul Silvio Berlusconi is a good example of this same kind of policy. According to *Reporters without Borders* annual report (2003), "Berlusconi effectively controls the material seen by 90 per cent of television viewers in Italy" (Reporters without Borders, 2003). Berlusconi became the Prime Minister of Italy and even used his power to issue a new law which allowed him to keep his media holdings while remaining in power. This link between the news media and government is considered by the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) as a real threat to democracy in Italy (*Without Borders* Annual Report, 2003). The mogul phenomena has widely effected diversity and freedom of speech and probably put the entire democratic system into question.

According to Schiller the information arena has become an essential aspect of capitalism and the mechanism of selling. Schiller attests that the vast bulk of media imagery produced is made available only on market terms and is simultaneously intended to assist the marketing of primarily American products. Thus, television production, Hollywood movies, satellite broadcasting - the entertainment industry tout court in which the United States plays the leading part - is its goods and services. This is manifested in the construction of television channels, where only commercial criteria are available - most commonly a sufficiency of advertising revenue (Webster, 2002, p131).

The consequence of profit seeking and the 'commodity of information' generate inequalities on a domestic and global basis. "Not only does the nature of culture and cultural production and distribution under capitalist market conditions tend increasingly to limit diversity of provision further from the point of consumption, but also the

structure of the market distributes the choices available in a highly unequal way. There is a tendency towards two-tier market structures in which the choices are becoming more expensive. A sophisticated, intellectual service is delivered to upper-income groups while an increasingly impoverished, homogenised service is offered to the rest" (Garnham, 1990, p125). This system is maintained by core countries in order to reap the benefits derived from controlling the flow of information. This illustrates the reasoning and motivation behind the American attack on UNESCO, as Schiller attests. "UNESCO has been a special target of Washington's anger because it served as a forum - nothing more - to express the complaints of 125 nations against the prevailing international information order" (Schiller, 1996, p325). However, as Schiller suggested, the electronic information highway is being promoted as a means to even out the disparities and inequalities that afflict people inside the United States and throughout the world economy (Schiller, 1996, p96) as a possible solution to the two-tier system.

The structure of the global market appears to be open and free for all nations whereas, in reality, it is firmly closed. The contest should be between equal parties but this structure reinforces the one-way flow of information from core countries to the rest of the world. This does not mean that there is no great benefit for peripheral countries in the global communication market: "on the other hand, global communication is empowering hitherto forgotten groups and voices in the international community. Its channels have thus become the arenas for contestation of new economic, political, and cultural boundaries. Global communication, particularly in interactive forms, has created an immense new moral space for exploring the traditional units of affinity rather than vicinity" (Tehranian, 1999, p60).

The new technology of TV satellite channels seems to have boosted the domination of core countries in the field of news. On the other hand it enables peripheral countries to seize opportunities, and thus some countries have attempted to establish alternatives

to erode the domination of core countries, such as Al-Jazeera and Al-Arabiya in the Middle East and Telesouth, the Venezuelan-backed Latin American TV station. With regard to these efforts to erode domination, we must also mention that there efforts are being made in the core countries to prevent American domination. To illustrate hierarchical domination, we can observe the structure of a pyramid. At the peak of the pyramid rests the United States, and below is the rest of the world. This leads us to talk about the specific phenomenon of American domination. In order to analyse the nature of American media domination its may be useful to cast a light on the history of its emergence as a global phenomena.

Weeks (1996) argues that the origin of American imperialism was in the 1750s after the adoption of the Constitution. Weeks argue that the adoption of the constitution gave the central government the right to impose tax and the establishment of armies and navies. "Over all the new Constitution erected a legal framework for an extensive political, economic, and military union with the capacity to assert its will both domestically and on the world stage" (Weeks, 1996, p18). Some argue that the American expansion is due to the nature of the American political institution effectiveness as O'Sullivan quoted in Weeks (1996) argues: "organized under that admirable federative principle which can govern equally a continent or a country" (Weeks, 1996, p85). According to Weeks the need for expansion combined with sense of 'the missionary' with regards the rest of world. "By the 1820s the rapid growth and enormous success of the United States bred unbounded confidence in the future and in the nation. Events did seem to reveal a divine destiny in the American experience; the tide of world history appeared to be flowing in the American direction" (Weeks, 1996, p60). A new term of 'American Manifests Destiny' was coined to justify American expansion and its uniqueness. Weeks argues that the American Manifest Destiny "reflects three key themes: the special virtues of the American people and their institutions; their mission to redeem and remake the world in the image of America;

and the American destiny under God to accomplish this sublime task” (Weeks, 1996, p60). In tracing such kind of convention in American history it could be useful in revealing the bases and justifications of American expensing and imperialism. The theory of American missionary and divine mission play as ideology to justify its invasion to other countries. Unsurprisingly George W.Bush claimed that “ he was told by God to invade Iraq and attack Osama bin Laden's stronghold of Afghanistan as part of a divine mission to bring peace to the Middle East, security for Israel, and a state for the Palestinians” (Cornwell, 2005).

The America commerce across the global was also crucial element in American domination. According to Weeks (1996) “by the 1820s the overseas commerce was part of a global trading network centred on the North Atlantic but with important interest in the Mediterranean, the Pacific, and South America” (Week, 1996, p65). In fact the supremacy of American economy provides America with a powerful position in the world even before the First World War. As Ikenberry (1989) argues “as early as 1900 the United States was already the world’s largest industrial producer; on the eve of World War I the United States had twice the share of world industrial production as Britain and Germany, its nearest industrial rivals. This trend toward economic dominance was rendered more pronounced by the war itself, which destroyed the industrial base of the European economies and further expanded the American counterpart” (Ikenberry, 1989, p380). America employs its resource to shape the world order after the Second World War. The American security commitments towards Europe took the form of NATO whereby American extended its military bases and used Europe as extended ground for America against the threat of the Soviet Union and communist bloc. America used its aid and other institutions including Marshal Plan to reshape Europe according to its own interest. America even used that as legitimate interference in for example preventing communism in spreading in Europe. For example, according to Ikenberry(1989), the American role during the Italian election in

1948 was clear and crucial to prevent the socialist party winning the election. "In the end, with massive American covert aid and treats of the cut-off of Marshal plan assistance, the Christian democrats won a commanding electoral victory and a majority in parliament" (Ikenberry, 1989, p396).

The threat of communism and Soviet Union provided America with ideal justification for its interference in other states' business as well as making American leadership of Europe appear more acceptable. According to Harvey "the US placed itself at the head of collective security arrangements, using the United Nation and even more importantly, military alliances such as NATO, to limit the possibility of inter-capitalist wars and to curtail the influence of the Soviet Union and then China. It used its own military power, covert operations, and all manner of economic pressures to ensure the creation or continuance of friendly governments" (Harvey, 2003, p 53). Even after the end of Cold War and the demise of Soviet Union, America still used the same policy, this time under the name of the 'war on terror' to justify its leadership of Europe, its right to interfere in or invade other countries in order to protect international security. The ongoing American wars in both Afghanistan and Iraq are good examples of such policies. In fact America used both coercion and precaution to exert its domination across the world. However, in this study cultural domination is the main issue of our analysis. Cultural imperialism is one of the global phenomenon which gains considerable discourse in recent years in particular. In fact one of the weapons which America used in order to ensure its overall hegemony is cultural imperialism. As Harvey argues: "Cultural imperialism became an important weapon in the struggle to assert overall hegemony. Hollywood, popular music, cultural forms, and even whole political movements, such as those of civil rights, were mobilized to foster the desire to emulate the American way" (Harvey, 2003, p56). Chapter three deals with American domination as a global phenomenon in more detail.

Even though some peripheral countries such as Qatar and Saudi Arabia or collective efforts in Latin America or Asia, have achieved a considerable level of success in terms of news channels we should take into consideration the high cost of such ventures which prevent the majority of peripheral countries from following this policy to rival the core countries in terms of news.

In fact the main satellite channels which we take as examples are either the fruits of collective efforts or they are owned or funded by wealthy oil states such as Qatar, Saudi Arabia or the United Arab Emirates.

The Controversy over News Coverage

Controversy over news Contents

Following the literature review the study focuses on the mechanisms of core countries' news production and the main factors which affect their news content. This includes the impact of news organisations, censorship and the role of culture in news content.

The controversy over news coverage has its roots in the emergence of news agencies. In fact, the monopoly of news coverage was the first controversial issue as the major news agencies divided the world between themselves. The world started to read and listen to news from the perspectives of the major news agencies.

The content of news has become another aspect of the controversy, particularly after the emergence of national news agencies and the revolution in mass communications which promoted the significance of news stories. In communication terms the world became smaller and the thirst for news coverage increased. However, some aspects of news coverage may concern Southern countries more than other countries.

There are many factors which could shape news stories and their contents. These elements are vital in filtering news and deciding what should and should not reach the audiences. Cultural editorial and organizational issues all affect news stories and their perspectives and may tip the scale in favour of particular kinds of news stories.

According to Herman and Chomsky (1994), there are five main filters able to affect the news. The first of these is size, concerning the concentrated ownership and profit orientation of the mass media. The large scale of investment and the loss of rules limiting media concentration and cross-ownership have created very large and powerful media firms which focus more intensively on profitability. As the concentration of media firms has become greater and greater, this has led to two main issues. The first is that the big firms have taken over the smaller mass media organizations and reduced competition. Some scholars consider this a real threat to the principles of democracy. This argument is based on the fact that democracy is supposed to equal freedom of choice and the availability of a variety of information sources. The second fact is that firms concentrate on making profit, which means that news becomes valued for its profitability and not its usefulness or integrity.

In fact, “the dominant media firms are quite large businesses; they are controlled by very wealthy people or by managers who are subject to sharp constraints by their owners and other market-profit-oriented forces; and they are closely interlocked, and have important common interests, with other major corporations, banks, and governments. This is the first powerful filter which will affect news choices” (Herman and Chomsky, 1994, p14).

The second filter is advertising. In order to scale down the costs of its programmes and news coverage, mass media is attracted to advertising. It has become very difficult for the mass media to rely on the revenue from sales alone. In order to attract

advertising, the mass media seek to reach as great an audience as possible. This is because of the fact that the greater the audience numbers you have, the more advertising you can get. This has strongly affected the quality of mass media and has led them to concentrate on sensationalist programming that features gossip, rumours, celebrities, sex and crime, and so on. News has become a significant means of fulfilling this aim.

The third filter is the reliance of the media on information provided by governments, businesses, and 'experts' funded and approved by these primary sources of the mass media. The relationship between the mass media and powerful sources of information is fortified by economic necessity and reciprocity of interests. Mass media seek reliable and steady sources of news as well as reduction in the cost of news coverage. These information sources become part of daily news coverage, attracting the mass media by providing them with all the facilities they need to cover news. The high flow of news from these sources meets the demand for cheap, reliable news stories which have become known as 'routine', giving these powerful sources easy access to the media, while on the other hand 'non-routine' sources have had to struggle to gain media access as Herman and Chomsky (1994) pointed out. In fact, the influence of these powerful sources on the mass media has become more significant and takes different shapes. "Powerful sources may also use their prestige and importance to the media as a lever to deny critics access" (Herman and Chomsky, 1994, p22).

The fourth filter is 'flak'. This is used as a means of disciplining the media. Flak, as Herman and Chomsky (1994) defined it "refers to negative responses to a media statement or program. It may take the form of letters, telegrams, phone calls petitions, law suits, speeches and bills before Congress, and other modes of complaint, treat, and punitive action. It may be organized centrally or locally, or it may consist of the entirely independent action of individuals" (Herman and Chomsky, 1994, p26). The

mass media usually tries to sidestep flak by avoiding any programmes which could produce it. In fact flak can be costly to the media if it leads to advertising boycotts, this being the main source of media income. According to Herman and Chomsky,

“During the McCarthy years, many advertisers and radio and television stations were effectively coerced into quiescence and the blacklisting of employees by the threats of determined Red hunters to boycott products. Advertisers are still concerned to avoid offending constituencies that might produce flak, and their demand for suitable programming is a continuing feature of the media environment. If certain kinds of fact, position, or programme are thought likely to elicit flak, this prospect can be a deterrent” (Herman and Chomsky, 1994, p26).

Flak can take many forms. It may be direct, such as letters or phone calls from any high authority or powerful group, or indirect by complaining to the owners of the media constituencies such as employees or stockholders. Sometimes flak can be generated by establishing institutions specifically to attack the media, or even in political campaigns which place increasing pressure on the media. In America the corporate community has funded institutions to produce flak. The American Legal Foundation, the Media Institute and the Centre for Media and Public Affairs are good examples.

“The producers of flak add another’s strength and reinforce the command of political authority in its news-management activities. The government is a major producer of flak, regularly assailing, threatening, and ‘correcting’ the media, trying to contain any deviation from the established line. News management itself is designed to produce flak. In the Reagan years Reagan was put on television to

exude charm to millions, many of whom berated the media when they dared to criticize the 'Great Communicator' (Herman and Chomsky, 1994, p28).

The fifth filter is the ideology of anti-communism during the Cold War. In particular, this aspect has dominated Western government agendas. The former Soviet Union, China and other Eastern bloc countries were portrayed as a real and dangerous threat which could abolish Western prosperity. This so-called real threat helped the Western countries to mobilize the populace against the enemy by the manufacturing of fear. The concept of this enemy was very fuzzy and was used to describe any foe, as Herman and Chomsky pointed out.

"The anti-Communist control mechanism reaches through the system to exercise a profound influence on the mass media. In normal times as well as in periods of Red scares, issues tend to be framed in terms of a dichotomized world of communist and anti-Communist power, with gains and losses allocated to contesting sides, and rooting for 'our side' considered an entirely legitimate news practice. The ideology and the religion of anti-Communism is a potent filter" (Herman and Chomsky, 1994, pp30-31).

However after the events of September 11th2001, the new enemy has become terrorism, which is unfairly linked with a particular religion and culture.

The Vietnam War coverage was a good example of the impact of news coverage and on public opinion, on the coverage by news organizations of subsequent conflicts, including the current wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. The high number of casualties and the ordeals of that war created great pressure on the American government and

accelerated its withdrawal. In order to avoid such experiences the American government created a way to avoid such effects, particularly in times of war. This idea became known as a 'pool', where a group of reporters bonded with soldiers and covered the news under the restrictive and watchful eye of the military.

This strategy was adopted during the American invasions of Grenada in 1983 and Panama in 1989 and during the Gulf War in 1991. During the Gulf War,

“the American pools did not allow satellite equipment. Instead, reporters in their pools were expected to submit copy and pictures to their ‘minders’ (Public Affairs Officers) for security prior to delivery to Forward Transmission Units (FTUS) who would relay the material back to the hordes of journalists back in Riyadh (the so-called ‘hotel warriors’) for transmission to the rest of the world” (Cottle, 2004, p75).

The Gulf War is a significant example of the new phenomena of censorship. In fact, the major Western news agencies and news satellite channels gave the Arab governments the green light to reinforce their grip on the media by setting up such precedents. On the other hand the coverage of the Gulf War created a gap between the Arab audience and the major news channels in particular. The Arab audience accused these channels of being biased in their news coverage and neglecting significant events which should have been covered during the Gulf War. That fact created an ideal environment for new channels to be launched to quench the region's thirst for reliable news sources. Some Arab countries took the initiative and set up new satellite channels which have become a major new phenomenon in the region.

We could argue that the news is processed through three main stages which could affect news content. The first stage is when news is raw, that is at the point where it

has not been shaped by news producers such as reporters and journalists. The second stage concerns how the news is presented. For example the use of particular phrases could affect the objectivity of the news, or specific words could convey and represent people, things, events and places in a particular way. A good example of this is the way that Nelson Mandela was presented as a terrorist by the Western media. Years later, however, he became the image of the new South Africa and was described as the liberator of its people. The third stage concerns the elements which follow the news coverage, including the type of footage or photographs used. News sources such as witness accounts and reporters' analysis also give journalists the chance to emphasize particular elements in the news story and marginalize others. This strongly affects the objectivity and impartiality of news coverage.

Core countries seem to look at the rest of the world through their own cultural prisms and consider this as the only acceptable form of narrative. This one-dimensional perspective appears to strengthen the point of view of many Arabs that the Western mass media serve political purposes and ignore Arab interests. Arab audiences feel that the mass media of the core countries tend to misrepresent their culture and intentionally demonise them. According to Said, Western mass media have misrepresented the Arabs since the 1976 Israeli war on Egypt. "Yet films and television shows portraying Arabs as sleazy 'camel jockeys', terrorists and offensively wealthy 'sheikhs' pour forth anyway" (Said, 1994, p42).

This may play a crucial part in shaping the Arab audiences' attitudes and tipping the balance in favour of regional news outlets, particularly satellite channels. In fact, these channels pay great attention to the concerns of Arab audiences and have successfully managed to put Arab issues on the global agenda.

Audiences and their reception of television programmes were the main focus of two significant studies in the field of media and cultural studies. The first is Morley (1983) study to *Nationwide television programme* and the second is Moore's (1993) study of *the adoption of satellite television*.

Morley (1980) adopted Parkin's models in his analyse to Nationwide viewers responses to *Nationwide Television* program. Morley outlined three hypostatical positions which the reader of any programme may occupy: the dominate reading, negotiated reading and oppositional reading. These three positions were the key elements Parkin's (1970) argument on what he called the 'meaning system'. Parkin (1970) suggested that the class structure forms the basis from which differently situated social groups develop different 'meaning system' within the terms of which any message from dominant ideology is 'decoded" (Hartley, 1982, p148). Parkin (1970) suggested three meaning systems whereby three codes develop. Firstly the dominant code which means the message is decoded within dominant ideology and the message will be accepted. Secondly the negotiated code here decoding may be partly resisted. Finally the oppositional code whereby the dominant ideology is refused (Hartley, 1982, p148).

Hall has developed Parkin's argument and suggested three hypothetical decoding positions "he calls these the dominant-hegemonic position, or the 'preferred reading, the negotiated position and the oppositional position. To read the message from the dominant or preferred position, the viewer takes the connoted meaning from, say, a television newscast or current affairs program full and straight, and decodes the message in terms of the reference code in which it has been encoded" (Turner, 2003, p75). The preferred reading is essential in the coding and decoding model. Preferred reading is the ideological contents coded inscriptive on the message which aims to serve political, cultural or ideological agenda. According to Kim "the concepts of

preferred meaning which refers to the dominant meaning encoded in a text, which can attempt to prefer but cannot prescribe or guarantee the viewer's decoding" (Kim, 2004, p85).

According to Tunner (2003) the majority of viewers read television messages through the production of negotiating readings. Hall's (1980) definition of the negotiation reading is of that "which accord the privileged position to the dominant definition of events while reserving the right to make a more negotiated application to local conditions" (Turner, 2003, p75). The oppositional decoding occurs when individuals decoded the message within particular political or ideological background and oppose it. For example, this happened when individuals watch or receive political messages from other political parties which they oppose or vote against. Morley showed an episode of *Nationwide* to twenty-six different group viewers. He used group rather than individuals in order to analyse the collective construction of interpretation and interchange between respondents in a group situation (Morley, 1980, p33).

Morley's project aimed to explore the decoding process focussing in particular on two main forces which affect the production of meaning firstly:

"the determination on meaning produced through particular forms of textual organization of signs. Centrally, in the Nationwide project, this involved the concept of the preferred reading of a text: the sense in which a text can be seen to be organized in such a way as to narrow down the range of potential meanings that it can generate-i.e. the notion of textual closure operating on the polysemic potential of sign". Secondly "the determination on meaning produced by the affectivity of the traditional sociological/structural variables-age, sex, race and class- in terms of the way a person's position in these structures may

be seen to determine that person's access to various discourses in play in the social formation"(Morley, 1992, p119).

The dominant code in which the encoded meaning was accepted was made by students, management groups, and apprentices. Whereas the "negotiated readings were made by teacher training and university arts students. Trade union groups, depending on their, roles as either official or shop stewards, produced version of negotiated or oppositional decodings" (Imores,1993,p21).finally Morley finds that black further education students adopted oppositional readings as this group were alienated from the discourse and their response was 'a critique of silence' and some of them refused to read the programme at all (Morley, 1980, pp142-143).

In his attempt to develop a more complex model in order to deal with the organisation cultural consumption in numbers of modes or genres Morley argues that the distribution of cultural competence regarding soap opera, and current affaires requires the viewers to be competent in certain forms of knowledge (Morley, 1992, p129).

Morley argues that without this knowledge or codes "the particular content/items within the programmes will remain incomprehensible" (Morley, 1992, p129). Morley (1992) argued that "while the competences necessary for reading soap opera are most likely to have been acquired by those persons culturally constructed through discourse of femininity, the competences necessary for reading current affairs television are most likely to have been acquired by those persons culturally constructed through discourses of masculinity (with the added rider that, in this latter case, the other probable conditions of access to these forms of cultural competence are being white and being middle or upper class)" (Morley,1992,p129).

Morley describes three hypothetical decoding positions: hegemonic-dominant, negotiated and oppositional decoding resulting from the inflection of viewers' social conditions of existence" (Kim, 2004, p85). Morley (1980) concluded that "if we related decoding to political affiliations then it does appear that the groups dominated by Conservatism- the apprentices, teacher trainings students and bank managers- produce dominant readings, while those dominated by labour or socialist discourse are more likely to produce negotiated or oppositional readings" (Morley, 1980, p134). Morley (1992) concluded that any individual might operate different decoding strategies in relation to different contexts and different topics which means that the same person may make oppositional readings and dominant in others (Morley, 1992, p135).

In his work regarding the gendered framework of family viewing Morley interviewed eighteen families from south London (Morley, 1992, p144). He explained the effect of gender such as programme type and style of viewing. Morley used quantitative methodology to investigate the social context of watching Television and he examined number of factors which effect the watching. He set number of questions in order to investigate the differences hiding behind the practice of watching television. This includes "which family members, in which types of families, use their television for which purposes at which points in the day? What are the factors that give rise to different patterns, and how are they understood by respondents themselves? in short, how do family dynamics interact with viewing behaviour?" (Morely, 1992, p143). Morley findings suggested that men and women's viewing habits offer contrasting accounts. Morley argues that these differences are a result of each gender social role which both man and women occupy within the home" (Morley, 1992, p145). "Home is primarily defined for men as a site of leisure...while the home is primarily defined for women as sphere of work" (Morley, 1992, p146). Women were tend to be more open to talking about television programmes with their friends and workmates whereas men were less keen to do so" (Morley, 1992, p150). Morley also find differences between

the genders in programme-type preferences. In this aspect Morley argues that there was consistency in programme-type preferences,“ whereby masculinity was primarily identified with strong preference for ‘factual’ programmes (news ,current affairs, documentaries) and femininity identified with a preference for fictional programmes” (Morley,1992, p155). In terms of watching national and international news Morley finds that there are some differences between the two genders. Women for example said that they do not understand what international economic news is about. Both genders were interested in news about local crime. Whereas, “conversely, they frequently see themselves as having no practical relation to the area of national and international politics presented the main news, and therefore do not watch it” (Morley,1992, p157). Morley argument here is highly relevant to this study particularly in terms of the social context of watching news. The collective watching if television programmes and the discussion of their contents are common practise in Arab region and in Libyan society in particular. Chapter six will examine the social context and the discussion of watching news in Libya among other factors and habits in watching news television.

Moore's (1993) study of domestic consumption of satellite Television culture is also takes the same direction as Morley's study. Both studies were about the audiences and decoding of messages. In order to investigate the embedding of satellite television in everyday life Moore's (1996) interviewed eighteen households in south Wales city between the summer of 1990 and winter of 1992. (Moore's, 1996, p32). He traced the consumption and the attitudes of these families regarding satellite television. The central theme of Moore's study was “the complex relationships between meaning, social differences and power both in and across daily domestic settings” (Moore's, 1996, p72). Moore's concern was “with the ways in which a new media technology gets ‘hitched up’ to live cultures of consumption, and thereby enables social subjects to actively ‘voice’ senses of identity and distinction” (Moore's,1993,p105). Moore's found clear divergence of both taste and competence among families. For example in his

analysis of the attitudes of Mr Gibson and his son, Moore's argues that the satellite television for the son is "part of a constellation of technologies and practices which provides the cultural material to express difference and establish competence" (Moore, 1993, p108). Whereas he realised that Mr Gibson's response to his son's attitude was a noticeable increase in restoration of antique furniture. This could be interpreted as sign of adhere to tradition and sense of unease towards this new technology. Moore (1993) argued that this could be good example for the adoption to new technology which may dictate renegotiation of the boundaries and relationships among families (Moore, 1993, p108). According to Moore (1996) the arrival of satellite television and its embedded in households provide ideal chance to observe situated practice of lay interpretation and cultural distinction (Moore, 1996, p32). Moore argues that "divisions of class, gender, generation or ethnicity do not just determine those practices in a mechanical fashion. Rather, it has been my intention to suggest that these divisions themselves are partly constitute through a making of 'meaningful distinctions' (Moore, 1996, p72). Moore concluded that gender and generation dynamics were in play within the home environment. Moore argues that "the precise form and content of cultural practices and preferences may differ-yet, for example, degrees of patriarchal control are evident in several of the households from each district" (Moore, 1996, p73). Moore argues that his study aims to analyse the significance of satellite television in the day-to-day lives of social audiences. According to Moore (1993) the adoption of satellite television at home as any new commodity "will inevitably become enmeshed within the existing dynamics of power in the domestic realm" (Moore, 1993, p104). Moore (1993) claims that the arrival of new technology could serve as signal for renegotiation of relationships between family members (Moore, 1993, p104).

The position of dishes on family's homes also was a subject of division in Moore's study. The dishes give the sign for neighbourhood and passers-by alike and become a

subject of judgment and attitudes. Moore argues that “for onlookers, the dish can either be a source of pride or else a cause of embarrassment” (Moore, 1993, p105). Some did not like to appearance of dishes Mrs. Harvey’s mother considered that dish as rather vulgar and said “you shouldn’t have that thing on front of such a lovely Edwardian home” (Moore, 1993, p112). Other families perceived satellite television more positively believing that it offered them an expanded range of viewing choices also offered them a travel to new places and expand the boundaries of communities(Moore,1993,pp110-111).In his analysis of the Harvey family attitudes, Moore traced the contradiction and difference in taste by focusing interspersed relations across three generations. This includes Mr and Mrs Harvey, their children and their parents (Moore, 1993, p111). Moore sensed that there were signs of passing competence from the family to their children or the new generation. Whereas he realised that there was kind of refusal to this the new technology by the old generation or Mrs Harvey’s Parents (Moore, 1993, p112). Moore (1993) concluded that there was a sense of anxiety over the public display of dishes and some of the families were worried about the Ariel’s appearance and for others the new technology of satellite television gained low approval (Moore, 1993, p115).

We may argue here that there is a parallel between Morley (1980) and Moore (1993) studies with this study. As one of the ultimate aims of this study is to investigate the significance of satellite television news channels to the Libyan audiences. Also the social context of this reception also was investigated in this study. By focusing on the Libyan audience and the social context of watching and discussing news this study may provide clear picture to the social, cultural and political dimensions of news reception in this country. Chapter six will deal with these issues in more details.

The Arab region has its own social and cultural fabric where many aspects need to be taken into consideration. Imposing Western criteria, in covering the news in particular,

seems to have backfired on many occasions and has made the Western media less attractive to Arab audiences. During the Gulf War in 1992 little was said about Arab cultural, social or political issues. The main interest of the Western media, particularly in America, was the brutality of the Iraq regime and the appalling figure of Saddam Hussein (Said, 1994, p42). This misconception is probably due to the dynamics of imperialism itself. As Said argues,

“While it is certainly true that the media are far better equipped to deal with caricature and sensation than with the slower processes of culture and society, the deeper reason for these misconceptions is the imperial dynamic and above all its separating, essentializing, dominating, and reactive tendencies” (Said, 1994, p42).

It's striking to see many example of aggression towards those who challenge the Western narrative of events or the history which is supposed to be common to all humanity. Said (1994) provides a good example of such attitudes. A series commissioned and funded by the BBC called *The African* was written by Ali Mazrui. This documentary dealt with African history, slavery and the experience of Islam in Africa as well as the experience of imperialism. The serial triggered controversy and Mazrui was severely criticised and considered as a propagandist. Television correspondent John Corry accused Mazrui of ideological motives and exaggerating the evils of Western colonialism (Said, 1994, p44). The main point here is that, as Said put it, “At its heart lay the axiom that non-Europeans should not represent their views of European and American history as those histories impinged on the colonies; if they did, they had to be very firmly resisted” (Said, 1994, p44).

Ironically this also seems to be the case with Al-Jazeera and its controversial programmes and coverage of Middle Eastern issues. Chapter Four discusses the

Western hostility towards Al-Jazeera which has taken many forms, including American military action on its offices in Afghanistan and Iraq.

The impact of commercialism and the transformations which have occurred in terms of news production which aim to suit the logic of business and corporate policy are the key issues of Davies' (2008) analysis of the British press.

In his argument concerning what he calls (Flat Earth News), Davies (2008) paints a bleak picture of news coverage in Britain. He defines the Flat Earth news phenomenon as follows: "A story appears to be true. It is widely accepted as true. It becomes a heresy to suggest that it is not true even if it is riddled with falsehood, distortion and propaganda" (Davies, 2008, p12). The key issue in his argument is that many news stories have been circulated in the global media based on propaganda and falsehood simply because journalists didn't check the facts. In fact, millions of words were written about the 'millennium bug' story by journalists who had no idea whether or not the bug existed. The story of the millennium bug is a crucial example in Davies' argument. This story created fear across the world and all of the mass media argued that this bug would destroy computer systems and lead business, the economy, health systems and even armies to a state of paralysis. Millions of dollars were spent across the world in protection measures. That story turned out to be false and a vast exaggeration. Davies (2008) lays the blame on the principles of commercialism and a corporate strategy which aims to cut the cost of news coverage and which puts journalists under extreme time pressure in accomplishing their duties. This transformation of mass media and the abandonment of the old rules of journalism, where news stories should be verified, seems to be the main factor behind this deterioration.

Business logic and cost cutting has led many news outlets to reduce numbers of journalists and editors, which prohibits these outlets from covering many events and

following news stories properly. The pressure of speed in news coverage, shortages of reporters and also cost pressures logically lead to the abandonment of more costly news activities. This atmosphere has also created a gap which news agencies have been more than willing to fill. In Britain the Press Association (PA) and public relations (PR) agencies have become the main bodies responsible for news coverage and circulation. "As the old network of local staff journalists and freelance agencies was hacked apart by the new corporate owners, the (PA) moved in to take their place - but on nothing like the same scale - to fill the gap left by the thousands of local reporters who had been lost" (Davies, 2008, p76).

In fact the significance of (PA) as a reliable source of news has been reinforced by legislation and it is even considered by BBC as one of the criteria of the reliability of news sources as a confirmed single source.

On the other hand, public relations (PR) agencies have become the main apparatus for government departments, political parties, institutions, trade unions and even churches to create news. The press office is usually the main body responsible for pouring out information and news stories to news outlets. This policy has effectively taken judgments about news values out of the hands of the journalists and given them to outsiders. As Davies put it, "Now, to a decisive extent, that crucial process of news judgment has been taken ... right outside of their [journalists] organisations, so that routinely they find themselves processing stories which have been chosen for them by people whose job is to shape news coverage in the service of powerful interests, whether commercial, political or other" (Davies, 2008, p87).

In order to quantify news sources and to examine news editorials in the British press, Davies commissioned specialist researchers at Cardiff University's School of Journalism and asked his team to focus in particular on the number of stories that

were derived directly from press releases and those taken from the main British news agencies. The team chose two random weeks to analyse stories in the most prestigious papers, including *The Times*, *The Guardian*, *The Independent*, *Daily Mail* and the *Daily Telegraph*. In total, 2207 news pieces were analysed.

The findings were quite shocking. “They found that a massive 60% of these quality-print stories consisted wholly or mainly of wire copy and/or PR material, and a further 20% contained clear elements of wire copy and/or PR to which more or less other material had been added. With 8% of stories, they were unable to be sure about their sources. That left only 12% of stories where the researchers could say that all the material was generated by the reporters themselves” (Davies, 2008, p52). The research revealed even more shocking findings when the team “went on to look at those stories which relied on a specific statement of fact and found that, with a staggering 70% of them, the claimed fact passed into print without any corroboration at all. Only 12% of these stories showed evidence that the central statement had been thoroughly checked” (Davies, 2008, p53).

Many news stories have become ‘Flat Earth’ news stories across the world as a result of the ineffective control of news coverage and news editing, including the millennium bug, the myth of WMDs in Iraq, and the contradictory stories about Abu Musab al-Zarqawi who was fighting against the American occupation of Iraq and was later on killed by the American military. All these stories bear considerable elements of falsehood and propaganda. This could be considered as the consequence of the mechanisms of commercialism which now run the mass media. On the other hand, the selection of certain news stories serves a news outlet’s management or its owner’s interests. Davies (2008) argues that these rules are unwritten values which inhibit journalists from carrying out their duty of truth-telling. According to Davies, there are

ten common rules which aim to help media managers cut the costs of the production and increase the flow of revenue (Davies, 2008, p114).

The first rule is to run cheap stories, which only requires journalists to pick up those stories which are easy and quick to cover and safe to publish. The second rule is to select safe facts, particularly those stories which can be attributed to official sources. The third rule is to avoid situations (which he describes as the eclectic fence) where publishing news stories could incur legal action against journalists or editors when they are published. This includes situations where the government deems information to be secret or if its publication could be considered damaging to the reputation of the news targets. The fourth rule is the selection of safe ideas which usually reproduce political values from a surrounding consensus. According to Davies, safe ideas “reflect what Gramsci called the ‘common sense of the era’. They may be entirely outrageous as moral or political statements but, if they are widely accepted, they will rest easy as a safe platform on which stories can be built” (Davies, 2008, p127).

The fifth rule is to always give both sides of a story. This means that when journalists publish a story which they feel is somehow unsafe, then they should simply quote from the other side to balance the story. “Balance means never having to say you’re sorry - because you haven’t said anything” (Davies, 2008, p131). The sixth rule is to give readers ‘what they want’, which requires the news factory to pour out stories which increase readerships or audiences, particularly concerning crime and scandals. The seventh rule is a bias against truth, where the news factory removes the complexity of stories and cuts them into smaller packages. Davies likens this to dismembered bodies being shoved into small suitcases (Davies, 2008, p140). The eighth rule is to give readers what they want to believe. This simply means that readers are never wrong and the news should feed the values of its consumers. The ninth rule is to always go with moral panics. This rule applies in times of perceived crisis, and simply

means selling audience “a heightened version of their own emotional state in the crudest possible form” (Davies, 2008, p142). The final rule is the ‘Ninja Turtle’ syndrome, which means that news outlets should publish their stories regardless of whether or not they are merited, but because they are widely published elsewhere.

These rules hamper news coverage and distort the truth. According to Davies (2008), “These rules fit neatly into the new structure of corporate news organisations. Journalists who are denied the time to work effectively can survive by taking the easy, sexy stories which everybody else is running; reducing them to simplified events; framing them with safe ideas and safe facts; neutralising them with balance; and churning them out fast. You can see, too, just how destructive this is, especially when different rules reinforce each other” (Davies, 2008, p147).

Even though Davies’ arguments focus on the British media, they could be applied to the mass media worldwide. As Davies put it, “Flat Earth news has gone global because all across the world, media organisations have suffered the same experience as their British counterparts – takeover by new corporate owners, cuts in staff coupled with increases in output, less time to find stories and less time to check them, the collapse of old supply lines, the rise of PR input being repackaged for more and more outlets, truth-telling collapsing into high-speed processing” (Davies, 2008, p96). Such a policy of flat earth news, where falsehood and propaganda circulate and are recycled in news outlets across the world, leads to serious consequences. It simply creates misleading information and ignorance.

“It was exactly this same blind focus in the news factory which left the American people after the attack of September 2001 asking in genuine ignorance: Why do they hate us? In the same way, it has left them for decades in overwhelming ignorance of the behaviour of US

security and intelligence agencies which has created such hostility to their country” (Davies, 2008, pp150-151).

This bleak picture buttresses a point of view held in many peripheral countries which considers that the core countries’ news outlets are unable to cover news stories impartially and effectively, where the usual mantra emphasises the neglect and sidelining of importance of their news stories. Also, of course, the general tone and content of news stories produced in core countries is a serious cause for concern in peripheral countries in terms of social and cultural factors.

Concentrating on the cultural approach, however, does not mean to underestimate other elements or their contribution in shaping news. Nevertheless, cultural elements are the main issues about which southern nations are most concerned.

Culturalist Approaches

The role of culture in the mass media is controversial, due to the difficulty of identifying the important cultural aspects and their influence on media content. Stuart Hall (1981) was one of the first researchers to concentrate on social forces and media messages. As Harrison argues, the cultural approach has achieved three things.

“First, like the political economic perspective, it locates the source of ‘bias’ and influence on news in an environment external to the news organization. Second, it recognizes that this environment is replete with different and competing views and expressive forms wanting to be read, listened to or viewed. Third, it moves away from understanding news consumption solely in terms of class or socio-

economic determinants and has introduced ethnicity, gender and age as factors to be considered” (Harrison, 2006, p28).

Culture produces the news in specific types and shapes the structure of its values. The cultural aspects present in every stage of news are constricted by and shaped by what is called “the map of meaning”. This means that the message or the news story would be received and interpreted by the audience who share the same background. They then understand the message and make sense of it. The map of meaning is shaped by religion, society, culture, politics, or any kind of belief.

“An event only ‘makes sense’ if it can be located within a range of known social and cultural identifications. If newsmen did not have available - in however routine a way - such cultural ‘maps’ of the social world, they could not ‘make sense’ for their audiences of the unusual, unexpected and unpredicted events which form the basic content of what is ‘newsworthy’. Things are newsworthy because they represent the changefulness, the unpredictability and the conflictual nature of the world. But such events cannot be allowed to remain in the limbo of the ‘random’ - they must be brought within the horizon of the ‘meaningful’. This bringing of events within the realm of meanings means, in essence, referring unusual and unexpected events to the ‘maps of meaning’ which already form the basis of our cultural knowledge, into which the social world is already ‘mapped’ (Tumber, 1999, p251).

Just a word or phrase in the news story could reflect cultural, religious or political motivations. According to Nigel Parson, the Managing Director of Al-Jazeera International, there was controversy at Al-Jazeera over the use of the phrase ‘suicide

bomber' in news stories. Al-Jazeera tends to use the phrase martyr bomber, but the phrase suicide bomber carries a moral judgment that it does not in English. This phrase is a good example of the map of meaning which could occur when we use a particular word in news stories (Parson, 2006, p37-43). The significance of culture-specific phrases such as the above is crucially significant to the effectiveness of the communication process. If there is a communication gap, for example, there is a great danger of misunderstanding and misinterpretation.

Some aspects of a news story could be considered as so important that it should be front page material. In fact the front page is culturally unworthy for some other societies or nations. Scandals and sex stories often make the headlines, as the Western mass media is highly interested in such kinds of news and on some occasions international news is marginalized by media coverage of love affairs or sex stories. The Michael Jackson child abuse trial and the Monica Lewinsky-Clinton affair are good examples of this. In fact the Clinton-Lewinsky affair in particular is a good example of the slippage of mass media toward scandals and sex stories. The affair was revealed to the media on January 21, 1998, the week that there were at least three international stories: The UN sanctions imposed upon Iraq and the possibility of another war with Iraq, the Asian financial crisis, and the bird flu epidemic in Hong Kong were all news stories that occurred that same day.

"During that week ...The total time dedicated on all networks to the Pope's Cuba visit was 42 minutes; for the Iraq arms inspections total time spent was 11 minutes. The two taken together received a total of 53 minutes on all three networks versus 111 minutes devoted to Clinton's sexual affair. The Unabomber trial got 10 minutes. Even the Asian financial crisis - and that's about people's money, a so-called pocketbook issue - received short shrift" (Flintoff, 2001, p76).

In Arab countries cultural aspects could be used as an excuse to broaden censorship levels and the criteria which Arab governments use to ban and censor news stories. “Any material in news stories which may affect family ties or its values, such as encouraging violations of the law, excessive violence or reference to gambling would be banned. Moreover, news items that encourage discrimination on the basis of colour, race, religion or social status are considered sensitive materials and are also prohibited” (Amin, 2001,p106). On the other hand cultural aspects could play a crucial role and shape people’s attitudes in terms of watching news or other media programmes. Audiences usually receive different messages from different sources, and their culture, values and religion make them take a particular stance towards these messages. Youichi Ito pointed out that

“Excessive inflows of information and cultural products from foreign countries can endanger cultural identity. Every nation, like every individual, has contradictory desires. They want to learn from others. Just as every individual wants to create and mention his or her individuality, every nation wants to create and maintain its cultural identity. Then a sense of cultural identity usually includes the sense of continuity and pride or self-esteem. Therefore, although no nation would oppose inflows of foreign culture and information per se, it would like to keep it under a certain level or under its control” (Ito, 1990, p441).

This approach has offered important insights into the consumption of cultural products. In his argument, Hall concentrates on the relationship between the sender and the receiver:

“Meaning depends on the shared frameworks, shared codes, shared knowledge-in-use, and shared interpretive frameworks between communicator and receiver. Otherwise, information will not pass from A to B - and there will be no circuit. If A ‘encodes’, then B (the audience) must ‘decode’. Each is a social practice. Both depend on a massive background of shared assumptions” (Hall, 1989, p277).

To extend this approach, the differences between the sender and the receiver create a communication gap or even conflict. In fact, by prioritizing some issues like sex scandals in the news, Western mass media imposes these issues on other nations in ways which conflict with their culture.

In fact cultural aspects could be considered the main reason behind the high profile gained by Arab news channels such as Al-Jazeera and Al-Arabiya, which have become the main news sources in the Arab region, even though the Arab audience now has access to a highly diversified satellite menu. According to Barkho (2006),

“For a text or piece of news to gain the attention of its readers or listeners, it needs, at least to a certain extent, to match their view of the world, which is normally grounded in history. Interpreting stories from an unfamiliar culture through your own lenses and relaying them back to the same culture is bound to result in failures of communication. For years the Arabs either had to rely on other media (mainly western) interpretations of battles that took place in their own backyard, or their own restricted and controlled media propagating the rulers’ or governments’ view. Al-Jazeera has apparently given them the chance to view their own culture with their own eyes” (Barkho, 2006, p3).

There is no doubt about the advantages of satellite technology in terms of enabling people to access a wider variety of options. It can be considered as a big step forward, yet on the other hand for some people it could become a significant motivation to seek programmes which are closely linked with their identity. The availability of options for Arab people has allowed them to control, organise and prioritise their use of different channels. For example, the increase in the popularity of government channels at certain times of the year could be seen to relate to coverage of religious festivals such as Ramadan and Eid.

The breadth and variety of channels has allowed the Arab people to draw comparisons between satellite channels and their domestic media. This has given people the opportunity to develop more sophisticated viewing tastes. Given such a variety, viewers are for instance more inclined to pick and choose channels according to their individual perceptions of reliability, particularly in the field of news. Finally, this availability has created a sense of national and regional identity among Arab people that could be seen clearly through the popularity of the domestic mass media generally and television programmes in particular.

Despite the availability of satellite television channels to Arab audiences, this does not mean that they watch them. Other factors must be taken into consideration, for example the language barrier and the high level of illiteracy in the Arab region. These kind of barriers have limited the significance of these channels and their influence. They may be restricted to highly educated elites who speak foreign languages. On the other hand, some of these problems can be attributed to culture. As Hall (2001) points out:

“ The degrees of symmetry - that is, the degrees of ‘understanding’ and ‘misunderstanding’ in the communicative exchange - depend on the degrees of symmetry/asymmetry (relations of equivalence) established between the position of the ‘personifications’ encoder-producer and decoder-receiver. But this in turn depends on the degrees of identity/non-identity between the codes which perfectly or imperfectly transmit, interrupt or systematically distort what has been transmitted” (Hall, 2001, p169).

In the field of news cultural differences play a crucial role and may lead to unpredictable feedback. The prophet Mohammed (pbuh) cartoon incident was a good example of this issue. For some people this issue relates to freedom of speech, whereas for others it is viewed as harmful and provocative. The main point here is that sources must be aware of the receiver’s culture, religion, and values. For example, news of events such as gay marriages or coverage of homosexuality is a very sensitive issue in Arab and Muslim societies. According to Hall,

“The lack of fit between the codes has a great deal to do with the structural differences of relation and position between broadcasters and audiences, but it also has something to do with the asymmetry between the codes of ‘source’ and ‘receiver’ at the moment of transformation into and out of the discursive form. What are called ‘distortions’ or ‘misunderstandings’ arise precisely from the lack of equivalence between the two sides in the communicative exchange” (Hall, 2001, p169).

These kinds of barriers help explain the success and the huge popularity of Arab satellite channels as the main sources of news in the Arab region. This is because the sources and receivers come from the same background, leading to the success of the

communication process. Alongside other Arab news channels, Al-Jazeera has established a new media era in the Arab region. Chapter four deals with the Arab media in greater detail.

The Monopoly of News Coverage:

News agencies

There is controversy over news and its coverage, particularly over the influence of aspects which could shape news values, such as ownership, organizations, culture, editors, and correspondents. The ownership and organizational influence in particular are aspects which have a profound impact on news values.

Historical review of the major news agencies

The history of news agencies reinforces the allegation that news agencies are always seeking to have a monopoly over the news market. In fact, the history of the main early European news agencies witnessed many agreements between these agencies, where they divided news coverage control between themselves. In order to restrict competition and gain cheap news coverage, Reuters, Havas and Wolff made the first agreement in 1856. However this agreement was weak and inefficient. Three years later the agencies made another agreement in France (Read, 1992, p54). A long term agreement between the agencies was then signed in 1867 which

“provided a geographical model for the contract signed in Paris on 17 January 1870 between Reuter, Havas and Wolff ... the 1870 arrangement was destined to form the basis of the international news order until 1930. It created a ring for news collection and exchange on

terms highly favourable to the three agencies. And it was binding in the first instance for the long period of twenty years” (Read, 1992, p55).

Due to that agreement the three agencies divided the world between themselves in parallel with the imperial territories.

“Wolff was given exclusive collection and distribution rights in Germany, central Europe, Scandinavia, and Russia. Reuters was given the news monopoly of the British Empire and the Far East. Havas was given the French Empire and Latin countries the Mediterranean. Provision was made for several shared territories, some of them important for news of revenue - Belgium, Egypt, Greece, Turkey, and South America” (Read, 1992, p56).

Unsurprisingly, the request to restrict the monopoly of these news agencies became an integral part of peripheral countries' demands for independence and liberation. The history of news agencies is tightly linked with the era of imperialism.

The UN worked on many occasions to set up a new policy for the national news agencies in the peripheral countries after their independence. UNESCO was the main organization which supported this policy. The national news agencies in peripheral countries found themselves working as a funnel to the major news agencies. As a consequence, the peripheral countries tried to find an alternative to restrict the domination of the major news agencies. This represented a demand for a new world order in the field of media.

The Major News Agencies:

Reuters

Reuters is one of the most powerful news agencies in the world and one of the most prominent suppliers of news and television pictures, reaching 1.5 billion people daily.

“Reuters supplies the global financial markets and the news media with the widest range of information and news products including real-time financial data; collective investment data; numerical, textual, historical, and graphical databases; and news, graphics, news video and news pictures. Approximately half a million users located in close to 60,000 organizations access Reuters information and news worldwide. Data are provided for over 400,000 shares, bonds, and financial instruments as well as for 40,000 companies. In addition, Reuters is the world’s largest news and television agency, with 2,035 journalists, photographers, and camera operators in 169 bureaux serving 163 countries. News is gathered and edited for both business and media clients in 25 languages. Approximately 10,000 stories made up of 1.5 to 2 million words are published daily. Because the national news agencies that distribute Reuters are permitted to resell the services, it is difficult to determine the precise number of subscribers to Reuters’ service. Reuters also provides news and information to over 140 Internet sites and reaches an estimated 10.9 million viewers a month. It has generated approximately 100 million web page viewers through the four major portal sites - Yahoo! Lycos, Excite, and Infoseek. Finally, Reuters’ services are delivered to

clients over the world's most extensive satellite and cable communication networks" (McPhail, 2002, p148).

The Associated Press (AP)

This is the second most powerful news agency in the world which has its roots in the history of the monopoly of news services since the mid 1800s. The Associated Press World Services distributes news and photographs to 8,500 international subscribers and translates its reports into six languages. In the United States, AP's board now consists of representatives from eighteen newspapers. Other subscribers to Associated Press are 5,700 U.S. radio and television stations, plus 8,500 foreign newspaper, radio, and television operations. AP distributes information to 112 countries and has a full-time news and photography staff of about 1,100 in the USA and 500 abroad. Approximately 8,500 international subscribers are clients of AP news and photos. It has won 27 Pulitzer Prizes for photography, the most for any news company (McPhail, 2002, p149).

United Press International (UPI)

This is the main rival of Associated Press (AP) in the USA, and its history goes back to 1907 when it started to cover the news from across the world. By 1935 it had become the major news agency in the United States. It reaches over 1,200 radio clients but, due to financial problems, the agency had to cut back its services and in 2000 the agency was sold to the ultraconservative Unification Church (McPhail, 2002, p152).

Agence France Press (AFP)

This is the third largest news agency, after Reuters and Associated Press. It is the main supplier of information from Asia, Africa and the Arab nations, particularly the former French colonies. It is subsidized by the French government but has a large number of clients all over the world. The “AFP has bureaux in 165 countries and employs 1,200 staff journalists and photographers, along with 2,000 stringers, reporting out of almost every country in the world. Of these correspondents, 102 are stationed in peripheral nations (22 in Latin America and Mexico and 80 in Africa and Asia) ... subscribers to AFP include 7,000 newspapers and 2,500 radio and television stations” (McPhail, 2002, p153).

Television News Agencies

There are three major agencies which monopolize television news pictures across the world. The biggest are Eurovision, which is based in Geneva, Reuters and Associated Press. Eurovision is run on a non-profit basis and aims to encourage the exchange of television news between its participants. Eurovision in its early stages aimed to act as a large pool of news from all countries. This policy made it one of the most preferred options among third world countries in particular. Reuters Television has 70 bureaux in different locations and aims to cover the whole world with over 260 client broadcasters in 85 countries (Boyd & Rantanen, 1998, p79).

These three agencies have clients over the entire world providing them with millions of dollars yearly for their services. Beside these agencies, there is a new phenomenon in the field of television news coverage which has occurred since the advent of television satellite technology. This phenomenon involves alliances between the major television

channels to exchange news coverage services. The major such television groups are the following:

- ***Reuters Holdings Plc***
(Reuters Television, Reuters wire service, Tele-Naticias, global programme production, Polish and Russian commercial broadcasting)
- ***Rupert Murdoch/News Corporation***
(Star TV, Sky, BSkyB, Fox network, global broadcasting and production)
- ***BBC***
(BBC, BBC-World)
- ***Carlton***
(UK programme producer and broadcaster, majority owner of ITN)
- ***Disney /Capital Cities-ABC***
(besides ABC in the US majority shareholder in WTN, Scandinavian Broadcasting)
- ***General Electric***
(NBC, CNBC, NBC Super Channel, Asian Business Channel MSNBC)
- ***Time-Warner***
(US production, broadcasting and third largest US cable operator, German-language regional news in Europe and now owner of Turner Broadcasting which includes CNN, CNN-International, specialization CNN TV and radio channels, Latin American CNN-International, German-language regional news in Europe, Russian broadcasting).

- ***Bertelsmann***

(European production and broadcasting. German-language regional news in Europe) (Boyd & Rantanen, 1998, pp89-90).

The New World Information and Communications Order (NWICO)

The debate over one-way flows of information was born in the Cold War atmosphere when the world was divided between the two super-power countries America and the Soviet Union. Another element which could be added in this era was the Non-aligned Movement and its influence among the peripheral and semi-peripheral countries.

In fact the debate over the New World Information and Communications Order (NWICO) started in the 1970s in the General Assembly of UNESCO. Since then, adopting new methods of exchanging information between the core and peripheral countries has been the main issue of UNESCO policy. The 19th UNESCO General Assembly, which was held in Nairobi in 1976, was a landmark when it adopted the phrase, the New World Information and Communications Order. Such a strategy for a new way of exchanging information was the focus of the General Assembly. "By this time, most peripheral countries had abandoned the desire for and rhetoric about a free press in favour of a development press, one that would assist in the positive development of their nation-states. They wanted a cultural stamp of their own making and not one imported from other nations or made in the USA" (McPhail, 2002, p181).

As a result of long debates over the inequality of flows of information, UNESCO decided to create an international commission for the study of this phenomenon. This commission was headed by Senator Sean MacBride and become known as the McBride Commission. The NWICO had created a gap between the core countries and

UNESCO as an organization. Some Western countries, and particularly America, felt that the organization sought to shift international power from Western core nations to the Soviet Union and the Eastern bloc.

The peripheral nations' objections to the Western media were focused in three main arguments.

"The first argument was a straightforward anti-capitalist approach that criticized the commercial orientation of the press, radio, television, and film industries. The second line of attack focused on the one-way flow of information from the United States, through wire services, television programming, and Hollywood productions, to other nations, with little if any reciprocal trade. Some peripheral nations, particularly those in Africa that were former colonies of European powers, also attacked the BBC, Reuters, and Spanish and French broadcasting interests, although less vociferously. Fear of electronic colonialism motivated the third argument, which featured a dislike of the history, norms, morals, languages, lifestyles, and cultural aspects conveyed through the contents of core nations' press, radio, television, advertising, and film productions" (McPhail, 2002, p185-186).

From the core countries' point of view the demand for a new world order in the field of media was made merely to achieve a political agenda. In fact the gap between the core countries and UNESCO was exacerbated by the adoption of policies which the core countries considered as hindrances and barriers curbing freedom of speech. That concern was raised by the announcement of the new policy of UNESCO in Paris in 1978. The Director General, Mahatar M'Bow, announced the framework for UNESCO

policy and wanted to ensure that the NWICO would become further intertwined with the New International Economic Order (NIEO).

The NIEO was adopted by the UN in May 1974 as a new international economic strategy. In its declaration, the UN urged member states to

“work for the establishment of a New International Economic Order based on equity, sovereign equality, and interdependence. Common interest and cooperation among all states, irrespective of their economic and social systems, which shall correct inequalities and redress existing injustices, make it possible to eliminate the widening gap between the developed and the developing countries and ensure steadily accelerating economic and social development and peace and justice for future generations” (McPhail, 2002, p183).

The UN failed to fulfil this strategy and the NIEO was frozen by the reality of the world's economic mechanisms.

“The 22nd General Assembly of UNESCO convened in Paris on October 25, 1983. One hundred and sixty-one countries participated in the five-week conference, which turned out to be one of the most critical in the history of UNESCO. Just weeks after the meeting was adjourned, U.S. State Department dissatisfaction with a number of UNESCO issues led to the announcement of the U.S. intention to withdraw from UNESCO at the end of 1984 unless its demands for substantial change were met. The United States not only withdrew at the end of 1985, but it also remains a non-member even today” (McPhail, 2002, p188).

The withdrawal of the U.S was seen as a conflict between the peripheral countries' interests and U.S policies and was considered a sign which showed that America would not change its policy nor allow any barriers that could prevent its domination. Officially, the State Department recommendation to withdraw from UNESCO was based on what it identified as three major problems: (1) The politicization of issues; (2) the promulgation of hostilities concepts; and (3) mismanagement and fiscal irresponsibility. The United States officially withdrew from UNESCO in January 1985 (McPhail, 2002, p190).

At the end of the 1980s UNESCO began a new policy and its leadership adopted a new strategy in the field of media. This new policy stressed the Western principles of freedom of speech and the development of an independent and pluralistic media. There is no doubt about the profound influence of the Soviet Union and Eastern Bloc in UNESCO during the 1970 and 1980s. Peripheral countries had benefited from that counterbalance when the two poles were in existence. Some may argue that the absence of that balance after the collapse of the Soviet Union seriously affected the UN and its policies, and not just in terms of the media. However, the world then became under the domination of just one superpower nation without an adversary. This new era was marked by the rapid progress of new technology, and the technology of satellite channels changed and profoundly shaped the global media.

Peripheral Country Alternatives:

Collective News Agencies:

Inter Press Service (IPS)

This is one of the organizations which plays a major role in South–South as well as South-North flows of information. It is a non-profit and non-governmental organization with headquarters in Rome and has bureaux in 41 countries. The IPS began in 1964

as an international bridge between the Christian Democratic Parties in Europe and Latin America, and it expanded its activities during and after the Cold War period in order to pave the way for more co-operation between nations in the field of news in particular.

The New World Information and Communication Order (NWICO) highlighted the inequalities between the south and north and the urgent need for such kinds of organizations to facilitate flows of information.

The flow of information became one of the priorities of the Inter Press Service (IPS) and its policy, particularly in the 1980s. By that time the IPS had offices in 60 countries divided between the continents, with 23 in Latin America, 5 in the Middle East, 4 in Africa and 16 in Europe as well as 4 offices in Asia and North America. The main aim of this organization is to reinforce technical and economic cooperation among peripheral countries and to streamline the flow of information from the south to the whole world.

“IPS media subscribers in 1996 included 615 newspapers and magazines, 79 news agencies and databases and 65 broadcast media. Another 549 NGOs and institutions were subscribers, a number which does not include about 20,000 NGOs who can access the IPS service through the computer nodes of the Association for Progressive Communication (APC), Peacenet, the Global Information Network (GIN), One World Online and other networks” (Boyd & Rantanen, 1998, p194)

The IPS has a distinctive policy in its coverage of the news and is usually interested in the kind of news which is connected with humanitarian or environmental issues. One study conducted in 1991 and funded by the UN Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO) showed the high rate of IPS coverage of FAO activities by examining print

media clippings that covered them. “Of the 2,932 clips that carried a news agency credit, 13.2% were from IPS, making it the third most often cited agency for this specific kind of news, behind Deutsche Presse-Agentur (19.15%) and the Associated Press (18.8%) but ahead of such traditional news Agencies as Reuters, Agence France-Press and Spain’s EFE” (Boyd & Rantanen, 1998, 195). In fact, we may argue here that this study is a good example of the IPS policy to impose its own perspective and priorities for newsworthy material and to marginalize other issues.

The Non-Aligned News Agency (NANA)

This organisation was created in 1976 as a pool to link the national news agencies of non-aligned nations. The 85-nation group agreed to share selected items from their national news agencies to “achieve the broad and free circulation among themselves of news, information reports, features and photographs about each other, and also provide objective and authentic information relating to Non-Aligned countries to the rest of the world” (Pinch, 1978, p163). The NANA was operated for its members by Tanjug, the national news agency of Yugoslavia. The mechanism of these agencies could be summed up as follows: participants sent items marked Pool to Tanjug in Belgrade by any means at their disposal and at their own expense. The daily limit was supposed to be held at 500 words a day, but some exceeded it. In some cases Tanjug merely monitored another country’s news service under an exchange agreement, and selected and edited items for inclusion in the Pool portion of its daily transmission” (Pinch, 1978, p166). This agency was supposed to work as an engine to streamline the flow of news between its members to provide news stories with non-Western perspectives and values and to help to correct the unfair Western news coverage of the southern nations. By working as a pool to the national news agencies NANA faced some criticisms, such as that the national news agencies of many NANA members

tended to be just propaganda vehicles whose news stories held little interest for other nations.

Due to the difficulties that faced NANA, particularly after the demise of the former Yugoslavia and the changes that occurred in the international arena after the collapse of the Soviet Union, the non-aligned countries reconstructed it. The sixth conference of ministers of information of Non-Aligned countries hosted by Malaysia in November 2005 decided to reconstruct the NANA into a new news network service called the NAM News Network (NNN). It now has 117 national members and operates from Kuala Lumpur in Malaysia. The NNN sees itself as “An alternative source of information rather than being in competition with other major news services. Essentially, it would serve as a conduit for NAM member countries to tell their story and use it as a yet another tool of communication for them” (NNN website, 2007).

Pan-African News Agency (PANA)

This was established in 1979 in Addis Ababa as a vehicle for exchanging news between African nations as well as with the rest of the world. PANA has its headquarters in Dakar, Senegal, and has partnerships with 48 national news agencies. PANA also has regional officials in the majority of African countries (Tumber, 1999, p357). UNESCO has provided guidance and support to PANA in recent years. This has allowed PANA to recover from many difficulties, particularly in terms of funding. PANA provides over 40,000 words, in English and French, every day in 38 countries across the region (Case, 1995).

Collective Television News Agencies

In the field of television services Eurovision has become the ideal model for all the continents as a non profit service and as a profound means to reinforce the flow of information between the nations which may be considered as an effective means to combat the domination of core countries. Theoretically, the exchange of news coverage between any nations regionally or globally is ideal as it could provide audiences with news from different perspectives. This can help to substantially diversify and vary the standards of news. However many of these associations faced many difficulties technically, financially and politically which have profoundly affected their performance in the field of news coverage.

Asiavision (ABU)

One of these new alternatives which has imitated the Eurovision model is Asiavision. It was formed in 1964 and has members from 30 countries. Its headquarters are in Kuala Lumpur. In 1977 Asiavision started to exchange its media products between members and by 1986 had started to use satellite technology in its services (Boyd & Rantanen, 1998, p210).

Afrovision (URTNA)

The main aim of setting up the URTNA services was to help African countries to exchange television coverage and to ease their reliance on the core countries' news coverage. It was formed in 1962 and has members in 84 countries. It started its exchange of television and radio programmes in 1974. Nairobi is the headquarters of its services. The exchange was then quite limited, exclusively using videotapes.

However, reliance on the Eurovision service in the field of news coverage remains high among the Afrovision members because of the poor service provided by Afrovision. In 1992 nearly 1,244 news items were exchanged between the members, 1000 of which came from Eurovision (Boyd & Rantanen, 1998, p209).

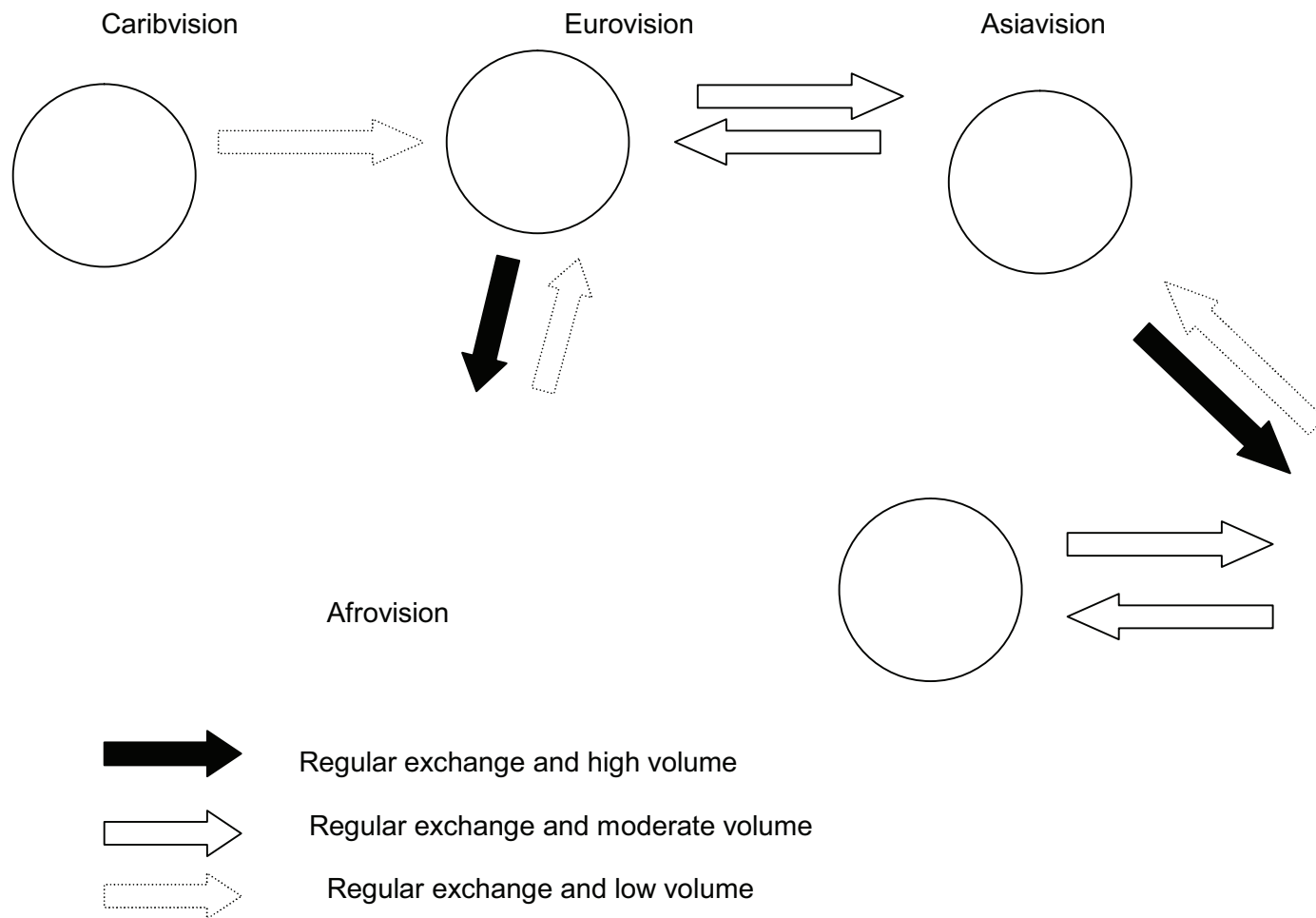
Caribvision (CBU)

This was formed in 1970 and has members in 17 countries. Satellite exchange services were limited to three members, and by 1997 that service was expanded to allow six members to exchange news and media products five days per week. A total of nearly 1,087 news items were exchanged in 1992 between the members. Caribvision has no regular exchanges with other associations but some of the major news sources take some news items from services such as CNN, WTN and Reuters (Boyd & Rantanen, 1998, p210).

Arabvision (ASBU)

This is one of the new alternatives which is supposed to reinforce the exchange of television news inter-and intra-regionally. This network is discussed in the next chapter. These alternatives have faced a lot of difficulties which have reduced their influence in terms of news coverage exchanges. As can be seen in figure 3, exchange between the regions is erratic and weak due to various factors which affect the South-South flow of news; in particular political influence in some of these networks such as Afrovision and Arabvision which are tightly controlled by governments. The control of the state may make news stories on many occasions merely a kind of pandering to government policies and achievements.

Figure 3 Inter-regional exchange: degree of interaction between the regions



Source: (Boyd & Rantanen, 1998, p220)

Moreover the interaction and exchanges between these alternatives are very weak and rely strongly on Eurovision, which means that Eurovision's role is to connect these alternatives and act as a pool of news. However, the news selected and exchanged via Eurovision is influenced by European viewpoints.

The poor performance of these alternatives has made them a funnel for Eurovision and other western agencies rather than a viable solution to the one-way flow of information. Both of these types of alternatives – the news agencies and television

news agencies - face the same difficulties which affect their ability to compete with the major news sources.

The difficulties could be summed up as follows. The first is government control over these networks which makes the news stories just a vehicle for exporting propaganda to other nations. This affects the content of news and its values, and on the other hand highly limits the reliability of these sources and their potential as sources of news. The second factor concerns technical and financial difficulties and the poor performance of these alternatives, which affect the quality of news coverage and other media productions in comparison with Western sources. The high reliance on the major western sources, even for coverage of regional events, has limited the significance of these alternatives and their attempts to reinforce the South-South flow of news and information.

Conclusion

The economic, cultural and political state of peripheral countries is partly a consequence of core countries' policies. This relationship between core and peripheral countries is considered as being a new form of imperialism. The gap between core and semi peripheral countries is becoming significantly greater. The influence of global conglomerates has aided this domination. In the field of media, globalization may open new doors for the peripheral countries to set up new alternatives, particularly in the field of satellite channels. America established a plan after the Second World War to control the flow of communication and information. This has become the main source of its wealth and a prime tool of its domination over the world.

This chapter has also discussed the controversy over news coverage which started a long time ago when the major news agencies monopolized the news and divided the world between themselves. The whole world came to rely on these agencies, and listened to, read and watched news from their perspective. Even after the new era started when the world was reshaped after the Second World War with the eclipse of the former empires, major news agencies such as Reuters, IFP, and the Associated Press have sustained a tight monopoly on news coverage.

News content is another dimension of the controversy, particularly, in terms of the cultural aspects of news stories. This is the main concern of a majority of Southern nations, who complain about the very Western viewpoint of their coverage and when dealing with other cultural issues. Both the monopoly of news and cultural differences between the South and the North were primary motives for adopting a new policy of news coverage, culminating in the so-called New World Information and Communications Order.

The only significant achievement which occurred as a consequence of the rise and fall of the New World Information and Communications Order was the highlighting of the inequalities between the core countries and the peripheral and semi-peripheral countries in the field of information. That led to some collective efforts globally and regionally. Southern nations tried to set up various alternatives to reinforce flows of information between themselves as well as to the rest of the world. The alternatives which were established have had a limited influence and have experienced many difficulties, and the domination of major news sources remains profound. A new era started after the advent of the new satellite technology which enables small nations to combat the core countries, particularly in the field of news coverage.

CHAPTER THREE

AMERICAN DOMINATION IN THE FIELD OF NEWS

Introduction

This chapter discusses American domination as a global phenomenon which has emerged since the Second World War. This issue is discussed within economic, cultural and political frameworks in order to grasp the fundamental mechanisms of the phenomenon.

The first section of the chapter deals with American domination and Americanization and raises issues such as the difference between Americanization and globalization and the roots of American domination reinforced by the so-called 'Marshall Plan'. This section also deals with some of the apparatuses used to reinforce American domination across the world, such as the World Bank and International Monetary Fund (IMF). The section also analyzes the flow of media products from America to the rest of the world, and raises some significant questions such as whether or not globalization has enabled some nations to compete with core countries in the field of media, particularly using satellite channels, thus eroding America's domination of the world. Tunstall's (2007) profound analysis of the domination of American media is considered in detail in this respect.

The second section of the chapter takes CNN as a recent example of American domination in the field of news coverage. There are many reasons for this choice. Firstly, this channel has become a symbol of American domination in the field of news coverage. Secondly, the emergence of CNN is considered as a turning point in the history of the media and live news coverage throughout the world. Thirdly, CNN has been widely imitated and considered as an ideal example for other channels, particularly in the Arab region. The third section of the chapter deals with the

alternatives which have been established in order to compete with CNN, including France 24, Euronews, Channel News Asia and Telesur.

American Domination

With the end of the Second World War and the dismantling of the structures of colonialism the world entered a new different epoch. The independence of India from British rule in 1947 and Indonesia from the Dutch in 1949 could be considered as milestones in the decolonisation era. In fact by the mid-1960s virtually all of the British, Belgian and French colonies in Africa, Asia and America became independent states (Waites, 1995, p48).

The end of World War Two also marked the emergence of the American empire whose norms, policies and culture have shaped the world since then. However, formal control of many parts of the periphery was exercised by the common form of colonialism where many core countries aimed to annex territories. The Spanish and Portuguese empires and the attempt by Italy in 1930 to forge an African empire are good examples of such forms of colonialism. This, according to Taylor, is a different concept from absolute domination by one world-empire (Taylor & Flint, 2000, p113). Taylor argues that:

“in world-system analysis, hegemony in the inter-state system is a very rare phenomenon. It has occurred just three times - Dutch hegemony in the mid-seventeenth century, British hegemony in the mid-nineteenth century and US hegemony in the mid-twentieth century. Such hegemonies encompass dominance in economic, political and ideological spheres of activity, but they are firmly based

upon the development of an economic supremacy" (Taylor & Flint, 2000, p67).

We may consider American domination as a distinctive phenomenon which has its own characteristics and mechanisms. However, the USA also shares many of its cultural values with other core countries, at least from the perspective of peripheral countries. We may also consider American domination in the field of news as a good example which represents the core countries' domination in the media. In fact the United States has sought for a long time to dominate the world by using 'soft' forms of power. This can be characterized as the "ability to achieve desired outcomes in international affairs through attraction rather than coercion" (Nye, 1996, p21-36). Since the Second World War and the Marshall Plan, for example, Europe has come under American domination. "The United States emerged from the war stronger than ever, while its capitalist world rivals were either defeated and devastated ... with its unique power, the United States was able to organize a new world order serviceable to its political and economic interests.

"It therefore pressed steadily for an ending of wartime capital controls and in favour of convertibility of currencies, a gradual reduction of tariff barriers through international agreements and bilateral arrangements, and open-door policies everywhere. It used the leverage from its control over the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and international Bank for Reconstruction and Development (World Bank), its direct loans and gifts under the Marshall Plan and other programs, and the Cold War, soviet threat, and North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) to force open doors that might otherwise have been closed to its businessmen and bankers" (Herman, 1997, p17).

There is no doubt that communication is considered a main element for progress in any society. America thus established a plan to control global communications as Britain once did.

“... US communication primacy in the post war years was the communication satellite undertaking. In this instance, the objective of this costly enterprise was explicit. It aimed to wrest global information control from Great Britain, which up to that time exercised worldwide domination of undersea cable” (Schiller, 1997).

The American objective was clearly sophisticated, as the use of information control and of cultural is inseparable in the

“control of information instrumentation, which invariably, goes hand in hand with control of the message flow, its content, and surveillance capability all from information intelligence. To be sure, the revenues from such control are hardly afterthoughts. Building and owning the electronic information highway will confer similar advantages, as did the earlier cables, to their monopolisers” (Schiller, 1996, p93).

In the era of the global economy, information has become the major source of wealth, as President Clinton pointed out.

“Most important of all, information has become global and has become king of the global economy. In earlier history, wealth was measured in land, in gold, in oil, in machines. Today, the principle of our wealth is information: its quality, its quantity, and the speed with which we acquire it and adopt it” (Schiller, 1996, p, 103).

In fact, the U.S has given the information industry a high priority as soon as it discovered that this kind of industry is very profitable.

“In the twenty-first century, communication, media, and information exports will become the primary engine of the global economy for the United States. Since the end of World War Two, US aerospace industries have provided the primary export product, with sales of both commercial and military aircraft to various nations around the world. These sales greatly assisted the US balance of payments as well as domestic employment. But with the end of the Cold War, the demand for military aircraft in particular has subsided” (McPhail, 2002, p97).

The world today is under the control of American products, and there are no restrictions or barriers to American corporations in marketing and selling their exports. The main aim of American corporations is to work together to dominate the global market.

“As US media cultural products flow more heavily into the global market, the interests of this sector become increasingly congruent with general transnational corporate objectives and policies. While non media companies - oil, heavy equipment, aerospace, agri-businesses - seek ever-improved means of communication, the sector is only too happy to make these facilities available, at a price, to be sure. At the same time it strives, generally very successfully, to expand markets for its own specific outputs” (Schiller, 1996, p95).

One aspect of globalisation is the shrinking of all nations' power, the exception being that of America whose power has expanded.

“Though in many parts of the world the state has indeed lost control, the fact remains that the American state has not withered away in the new free market utopia. On the contrary, US hegemony and sovereignty have been strengthened in spectacular fashion” (Burgi & Golub, 2000).

Some scholars distinguish between the theory of globalisation where opportunities are available for all, and Americanisation as a twentieth century phenomenon which describes the American hegemony that emerged after the Second World War. Taylor (1999) refers to it as “the arsenal and financier of war victory. America was now in a special position to project itself across the spectrum of social relations - political, cultural and economic. This is high hegemony, the period when the rest of the world is offered a comprehensive societal package. It is capacious Americanization” (Taylor, 1999, p113), and therefore it is “best understood by reference to the growth of mass production, mass consumption and mass mediation, processes intimately bound up with this increasing ‘footprint’ of America in the last century” (Campbell, 2004, p9).

For others, Americanisation as a phenomenon could be considered more comprehensive and ominous. As Sadar and Davies (2003) put it,

“The tsunami of American consumerist culture assimilates everything, exerting immense, unstoppable pressure on the people of much of the world to change their lifestyles, to abandon all that gives meaning to their lives, to throw away not just their values but also their identity, stable relationships, attachment to history, buildings,

places, families and received ways of doing and being” (Sardar and Davies, 2003, p121).

Americanisation seems to be the fate of the world as David Rothkopf, former Clinton administration official, pointed out: “For the United States, a central objective of an information age foreign policy must be to win the battle of the world’s information flows, dominating the airwaves as Great Britain once ruled the sea” (Nye and Owens, 1996). Rothkopf cited in Schiller, 1998 is confident that this will happen. The United States is

“the indispensable nation in the management of global affairs and the leading producer of information products in these, the early years of the information age. Accordingly, he views current trends with satisfaction: It is in the economic and political interests of the US to ensure that, if the world is moving to a common language, it be English; that if the world is becoming linked by television, radio and music, the programming be American and, if common values are being developed, they be values with which Americans are comfortable” (Schiller, 1998).

Tunstall (2007) argues that

“although Anglo-American media have been world leaders since before 1900, today’s leading media force is Euro-American. The European and American continents are the main importers, as well as exporters, of media. But the world’s people spend very much more time with their own media than with imported media” (Tunstall, 2007, p3).

Tunstall also argues that people prefer to be entertained and informed by media in their own culture (Tunstall, 2007, p5). He sees population size as central to his argument, and divides the world into four major media regions. The first region is Euro-America, which includes the whole of America, north and south, and most of Europe and Russia. This region has some 27 per cent of the world's population as well as the leading media exporters. The second region is China, which includes some 20 per cent of the world's population. China does import from other countries which are culturally close such as Taiwan, Hong Kong, and South Korea. The third region is India which has 17 per cent of the world's population and also the leading mass media industry in southern Asia. The fourth region is the Arabic-language area, which contains 22 countries and whose media intake is only in Arabic.

Tunstall considers the Euro-American region as the world leader in the field of media (Tunstall, 2007, pp8-9). However he pays less attention to the cultural factors involved in mass media importation and exportation, even though he admits that languages, cultures, and religions may affect preferences concerning mass media products. He argues that American media domination has eased as a result of its programming being copied worldwide, which can be considered as a first step in other countries producing their own programmes.

“By around 1960 the United States was far ahead of the rest of the world in producing cheap TV genres. The United States had had three decades of commercial radio and then commercial TV experience, especially in the case of quiz/game shows. In the 1950s and 1960s, new television services around the world mostly did three things, in sequence. First, they simply imported game/quiz and other cheap American productions; second, they acquired the right to make a local national version of, for example, an American game show;

third, networks in other nations began to build on these American models by creating their own shows” (Tunstall , 2007, p11).

Comparing America and Europe in terms of media exports and imports, Tunstall (2007) found that America outweighs Europe in many ways.

“According to this author’s guess, the overall picture has 7 examples of the United States beating Europe and 3 cases of Europe beating the United States. Six items are scored as equal; this generates a grand U.S. total of 10, while Europe scores 6. Most readers will disagree with some, or perhaps most, of this author’s guesses. Certainly, it would take a massive study to research the topic in full detail. This list is not just about ownership, or revenue, or ratings, or political impact. It is intended to focus mainly on media exports/imports, but it does not do so in any systematic way” (Tunstall, 2007, p280).

Tunstall concluded that Southern and eastern Asia are “already the world leaders in their numbers of television households. But neither seems likely to surpass Euro-America in the scale of international media trade. While Asia will have the largest audiences - and the most millions of eyeball hours - Euro-America continue to generate several national players that see themselves as significant media exporters as well as media importers” (Tunstall, 2007, p454).

According to Tunstall, America now imports some programmes from the Europe-America region, which implies that there is a sort of reciprocal reliance in this region in the field of media programmes, so that the one-way flow from America to the rest of the region no longer exists. Even though we may accept this point of view and

consider complete American domination as a phenomenon which no longer exists, it would be difficult to ignore the influence of American culture across the world which has moulded other nations' cultures.

In fact American lifestyles, food, music, entertainment, and films, or more precisely Hollywood style movies, have become deeply ingrained in other nations' cultures. This has led some to use terms like Americanization, 'coca-colonization' (Wagnleitner, 1994), or even 'McDonaldization' (Ritzer, 2004) in order to illustrate American domination and influence. On the other hand, the flow of news and information from core countries to peripheral countries, in particular, still exists and the struggle of small nations to establish their independence in the field of media is still far from over.

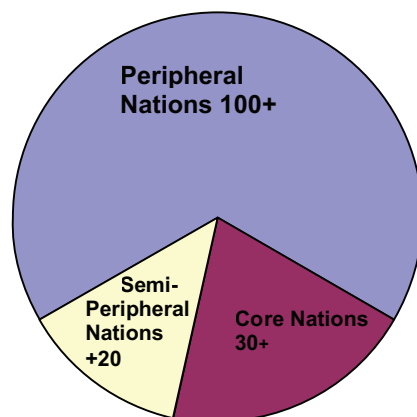
Some argue that the global market is an open and free market. "The traditional assumption that imperialist corporations are dominated by the United States is simply false, since today's multinational organizations include American, European, and Asian, as well as Latin American investments" (Volkmer, 1999, p 50,). Even if we accept this, American influence still prevails over all other nations. The experience of non-American business still indicates that to succeed in the global market, control over one's business should be relinquished to American management, "yet even when this occurs, the new owners, at least for the time being, usually are intent on keeping American creative and managerial media people in executive positions" (Schiller, 2006, p327).

Even for countries with the ability and resources to compete within the global market, American influence is still present, because "these nations have to compete within a certain market segment with American products and thus they imitate them" (Volkmer, 1999, p48). Specifically, in the current global media market,

“The three largest global media empires are all American ... all of the US media empires, along with their extensive advertising network, project and encourage US tastes, values, culture, and language around the world. To a considerable extent, it is this influence that concerns other core, semi peripheral and peripheral countries because of the impact of US multimedia fare on those countries’ domestic media. Their concern covers a vast range of cultural products such as music, movies, television series, magazines, books, and now the internet” (McPhail, 2002, p47).

In order to illustrate the world’s economic, political, and mass media relations, McPhail’s illustration (Figure 4) would be more appropriately reconfigured as a pyramid.

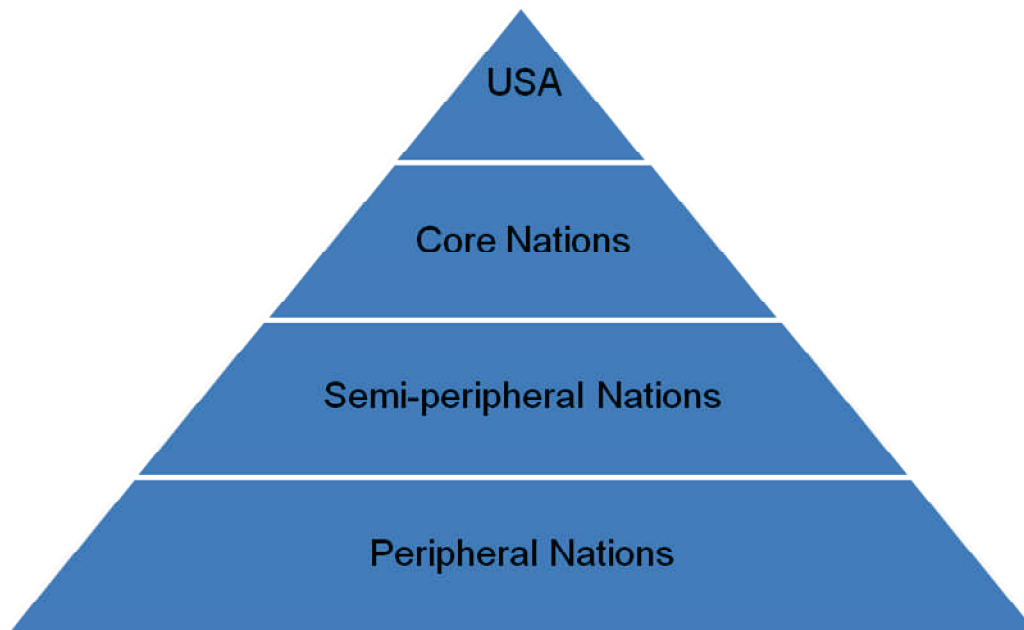
Figure 4 - The Three National System Zones



Source: (McPhail, 2002, p17)

America is at the top of the hierarchy, the other core countries are below and so on. The pyramid shape seems to be appropriate because it illustrates the easy flow of information from the top to the bottom, and the difficulty of counteracting this pressure from above.

Figure 5 - Pyramid of the National System Zones



It has become difficult for peripheral countries to fight the imposition of American domination in this arena. “Most foreign nations, with significantly smaller audience bases, are unable to compete with the expensive, high-quality production values of US dramatic television programming. In order to fill the available broadcast schedules and maximize their revenues, they purchase United States syndicated programming. Consequently, many nations, industrialised and less developed alike, experience significant erosion of their own cultures”. (McPhail, 2002, p102).

This form of domination has encouraged both peripheral and core countries to attempt to establish mechanisms to reduce American domination. “France provides an outstanding example of the extent to which a country is willing to use tax revenues to

subsidize media productions and products to compete directly with US cultural industries” (McPhail, 2002, p103). Also, “Canada began to impose restrictions on US media exports as they simultaneously began to subsidize their own media production, thus creating more programming to compete with US media products” (McPhail, 2002, p104).

In the field of satellite television channels, efforts have been made to restrict the American domination. CNN came up against much resistance. CNN has become a prime example of American domination in the field of news, and illustrates a turning point in the history of mass media. There have been many efforts to restrict the domination of such channels in terms of international news coverage.

CNN as an Example of American Domination

There are several reasons for analyzing the significance of CNN. First of all, CNN is an example of American domination in the field of news. The power of this channel illustrates the difficulties faced by peripheral countries in competitive news media markets. CNN illustrates a turning point in the field of mass media and their impact and influence on the whole world. Regarded as the godfather of news channels, the emergence of CNN motivated other channels to compete on its terms. This in effect has somewhat restricted the present influence of CNN.

“The launching of CNN’s international news network in 1985 brought about new forms of global political communication within a period of only a few years, affecting political action on many levels and on a worldwide scale by extending political communication globally. CNN has reshaped the conventional agenda of international or ‘foreign’ news and created a platform for worldwide communication. This journalistic initiative has

altered the focus of global news in an interrelationship of changing political centres and peripheries, and has given a new meaning to news, journalistic values, and the setting of a global agenda" (Volkmer, 1999, pp1-2). When we look at the potential of CNN, we find that it has great ability to influence the world by quickly responding to world events.

"CNN, a division of Turner Broadcasting Systems, is the world's largest international news leader. In October 1996, Turner Broadcasting was acquired by Time Warner for \$6.54 billion" (McPhail, 2002, p120). According to An Annual Report on American Journalism, "CNN was projected to earn \$337 million in operating or pre-tax profits in 2004" (Journalism-org, 2005). "The high-energy environment at CNN and its sister networks is home to about 3,000 employees worldwide. Currently, CNN has nine domestic and twenty-one international bureaus ... besides launching CNN headline News and CNNI, CNN has also branched out into CNN Radio. This division provides all-news programming to nearly five hundred radio stations nationwide. In 1988 the division introduced Noticiero CNN, which produces six hours of Spanish news for distribution on CNN in the United States and throughout Latin American. And in 1995, CNN was launched into cyberspace. CNN Interactive is the world's leading interactive news service. Its staff of world-class journalists and technologists are dedicated to providing twenty-four-hour-a-day access to accurate and reliable news and information from any location" (McPhail, 2002, p120). CNN has made great progress with its service globally by providing its news coverage in different languages. For example, "In 1999, CNN launched a Spanish- language channel in Spain. This new service is the first CNN local language news channel completely controlled, staffed, and operated outside of its US corporate headquarters in Atlanta" (McPhail, 2002, p126). CNN has increased its capability and its potential to ensure that its services will be the best in the world. The technology employed by CNN, and the spread of its bases,

particularly in news hotspots like the Middle East, have enabled CNN to cover world events more effectively. As Silvia suggested:

“The CNN newsgroup hosts almost a dozen news channels and a wholesale news service called CNN New Source that sells video news to some 600 stations and affiliates worldwide. The affiliates also generate locally developing news that can be fed by satellite to Atlanta or to one of CNN’s regional bureau from almost every country. CNN’s global growth has led to an increase in the number of international news bureau to 37 (27 of which are in international locations) and news staff of more than 4,000” (Silvia, 2001, p16-17).

CNN has succeeded in representing itself globally after its coverage of the 1991 Gulf War. This was considered as a turning point in CNN’s history as it began to spread throughout the world. After the absolute success of CNN in the field of live coverage of international events particularly during the Gulf War, many countries have established alternative channels, believing that CNN covered events from an American perspective. These countries felt that their perspectives were either marginalized or completely ignored. The CNN coverage and interpretation of the Gulf War has “bothered many public policy experts and politicians in other nations who were also reduced to viewing events and interpreting history at least a step behind CNN. As a result of the war, several governments, particularly European, established competitive alternative television services so that when major international events occurred, they would have their own broadcasters, analysts, and footage to serve their national interests, rather than having to rely on a foreign broadcaster such as CNN. These competitor networks included Euro News as well as the expansion of the BBC World Television Service” (McPhail, 2002, p123).

CNN's presentation of news coverage and its variety of programmes have motivated many channels to reform, and many countries have established alternative channels. This reaction does not include only peripheral countries which have suffered domination and a one-way flow of information, but also core countries. This has especially been the case since the CNN coverage of the Gulf War. "CNN has now attracted competition. Currently, two of CNN's main competitors in Europe and Asia are Rupert Murdoch's Sky News channel and the BBC. In 1994 the BBC launched a twenty-four hour television news service, starting in Asia. Although the BBC had previously run a limited European service, the Asian initiative made it a full-fledged competitor of CNN. Another CNN competitor is the EU's Euro News, a recent effort to present foreign news from a pan-European perspective" (McPhail, 2002, p199).

The absolute domination of CNN in the field of news coverage has raised concerns. In-fact, some consider that CNN is not wholly representative of all of the world's attitudes, believing that it marginalizes or ignores non-American national policies.

Different countries have had various motivations for establishing news channels to compete with CNN. A recent competitor in Latin America is Telesur (Telesouth), a Spanish-language station formed by the governments of Venezuela, Argentina, Cuba and Uruguay "which President Hugo Chavez has promoted as an alternative to US media outlets like CNN" (Al-Jazeera, 2005). The emergence of CNN as a major influential global news network produced a new communications approach to international relations known as the 'CNN effect theory (Gilboa, 2005). "The role of CNN during the Somalia crisis was very apparent in affecting American foreign policy. CNN acted as the main catalyst in American decision-making, causing the initial interference, and then later the withdrawal from the conflict, "referring to pictures of starved and dying Somalis and of dead American soldiers dragged through the streets of Mogadishu" (Neuman, 1996, pp15-16). "Today, the nexus between communications

and diplomacy can determine diplomatic outcomes, under certain conditions. Although paradigmatic shifts in communications historically have worked to move diplomatic practice from one paradigm to its successor, the recent development of live satellite coverage also affords communications the potential to determine foreign policy. Specifically, real-time global television alone gives communications this potential to affect diplomatic outcomes. Real-time television's immediacy and impact are the operative forces that allow communications to influence foreign policy" (Ammon, 2001, p88).

CNN has played a significant role in many international crises including, the wars in Bosnia, Afghanistan, and Kosovo, and the first and second Gulf Wars. Its live coverage has affected international public opinion and American foreign policy, as Lawrence Eagleburger, former secretary of State stated. "The public hear of an event now in real time, before the State Department has had time to think about it. Consequently, we find ourselves reacting before we have had time to think. This is now the way we determine foreign policy – it's driven more by the daily events reported on TV than it used to be" (Gilboa, 2005).

There is no doubt that CNN coverage of international events has affected political decision making, and has enlightened and informed international public opinion. In this case, it is not specifically CNN that has affected the consequences of these events, but the fact that CNN has offered the only live coverage. This influence of television satellite channels may consolidate a healthy climate whereby the truth is not obscured by the monopoly of one-way coverage. Despite the success of CNN globally, however, it has had a limited effects in the Arab region, due to the language barrier. This has led channels such as Al-Jazeera to play a significant role in providing alternative news coverage. The situation has led the US government to set up a new channel, 'Al-Hurra', to fill the information gap. CNN's coverage of the events

mentioned above leads us to a significant point. Live coverage potentially generates a healthy climate where public opinion plays a significant role in political decision making.

This analysis has illustrated the role of CNN as the dominant leader of world news reportage. The consequence of this fact for peripheral countries is that they cannot always effectively compete in the global market. On the other hand, the emergence of CNN has motivated many countries to establish similar channels, such as Al-Jazeera and Al-Arabia in the Middle East, and Telesur in Latin America. These channels provide an alternative option for audiences that are otherwise excluded due to CNN's one dimensional coverage.

Combating CNN

One of the achievements of CNN is that many other nations have mirrored its style and established news channels, which in the long term could serve the diversity of news sources. In fact we could distinguish between two different types of news channels.

The first category includes state-sponsored channels which are funded partly or completely by governments. The second is channels established by the contributions of many states or as collective efforts. In the first category we may consider some major news channels which are funded individually by particular nations, such as France 24, the BBC, and Al-Jazeera. Chapter three deals with Al-Jazeera in more detail.

1. France 24

The French government set up a news channel called France 24, which adopts the CNN style in news coverage and programming. The France 24 channel was established in December 2006 funded by the French government as well as the commercial television company TFI, with an annual operating budget of around 80 million Euros. The channel has a team of 170 journalists of 27 different nationalities. France 24 is in fact more than one channel. There is one fully French channel and an English channel, as well as a few hours each in Spanish and Arabic (Stevens, 2007).

The establishment of France 24 is good evidence that each country has its own priorities and its own perspectives on news coverage, which may or may not be generalised. France has established its own news channel even though it is a member of the Euronews channel which is considered as the European rival to CNN. In very simple terms, each country has its own agenda which reflects its political, cultural or economic interests. For the French media, for example, banning particular newspapers published in France in any francophone country would be given high priority in the French media and news coverage, whereas it may be marginalized or completely neglected in American media. Seeing events from a different perspective is the main reason behind the establishment of France 24. As the French President, Jacques Chirac, pointed out in 2002, he wanted to see world news with a distinctively different outlook from what has been described as the 'Anglo-Saxon' outlook of US broadcasters. The second category of news channels is those which are collectively funded.

There are three main examples of collective efforts in the field of news channels which may be considered as new alternatives which combat the domination of CNN in the field of news coverage. These examples are from three different continents. Euronews

covers Europe, Channel News Asia operates in Asia, and Telesur presents news to Latin America.

2. Euronews

This channel was established in 1993 by the European Union as a transnational news network. Its headquarters are in Lyon in France and it broadcasts in seven European languages: English, Spanish, French, Italian, German, Portuguese, and Russian. Euronews is currently second to CNN in terms of the size of the viewing audience across Europe. It reaches more than 90 million homes and over 10,000 hotels across Europe. It aims to provide a European perspective on world issues and regional affairs as in well as news coverage. Euronews broadcasts its own programmes and tries to rely more on advertisement in order to fund itself (McPhail, 2002, pp134-135).

3. Channel News Asia (CAN)

This channel is similar to Euronews in that both aim to combat CNN and broadcast news from different perspectives. It was established in 1999 and is headquartered in Singapore. It has ten bureaux and about 150 journalists across the region. It reaches 16.3 million homes and hotels across Asia (McPhail, 2002, pp135-136).

4. Telsur

This is a Latin American channel established in 2005 in Caracas in Venezuela and sponsored by the governments of Venezuela, Argentina, Cuba and Uruguay. The channel started up with funds of 10 million US dollars contributed unequally by the members; Venezuela with 51 per cent, Argentina 20 per cent, Cuba 19 per cent and

Uruguay 10 per cent. The channel has signed co-operation agreements with Al-Jazeera to exchange news coverage. The channel has also left the door open for other Latin American nations to join. However some have criticised this channel and consider it as a propaganda tool used by the Venezuelan President to attack American policy in the region.

Conclusion

This Chapter has discussed American domination in the field of news and cast considerable light on its roots and the mechanisms which have strengthened it. The chapter has also provided a detailed analysis of the influence of CNN and its role in reshaping the mass media, particularly in the field of live news coverage.

The chapter has also explored the wave of competition triggered by CNN and the alternatives which have been established across the world in response to this channel. This competition has even been extended into the Arab region, where many Arab countries have established new alternatives in order to have their own news outlets which could cover the news from different perspectives. The next chapter deals with this issue in more detail.

CHAPTER FOUR

THE PRODUCTION & RECEPTION OF NEWS IN THE ARAB REGION

Introduction

In the previous chapters the study dealt with domination in the field of news and the controversy over news coverage, and also focused on American dominations in this field, using CNN as example. The study in this chapter focuses on a particular region which could represent the peripheral countries as a whole. Although the Arab region has its own features and characteristics we may argue that the Arab region shares many aspects with other peripheral countries. This provides a good opportunity to analyse and evaluate these region's efforts, experiences and difficulties in terms of mass media. Also, there is the political, technical and financial factors which may hamper these countries efforts in this field. The study focuses more precisely on the significance of the new technology of television satellite channels and their impact on domestic and international audience.

This chapter deals with the common characteristics of the Arabic mass media and the domination and the monopoly of news that has spurred Arab nations to set up their own alternatives to compete with this phenomenon and reinforce the performance of their media. This chapter casts light on the collective efforts of Arab nations to reinforce the inter-regional flow of news. This chapter also deals with the common characteristics of the Arabic mass media and the domination and the monopoly of news that has spurred Arab nations to set up their own alternatives to compete with this phenomenon and reinforce the performance of their media. This chapter casts light on the collective efforts of Arab nations to reinforce the inter-regional flow of news.

This chapter also focuses on the progress of the Arabic media, particularly after the launching of CNN and the emergence of satellite technology which has enabled the

Arab nations to improve their performance in the field of news coverage. Particular reference is made here to studies by Samarajiwa (1984), Hafez (2001), and El-Nawawy (2002), Rugh (2004) and Sakr (2004).

This chapter deals with the emergence of the Arabic satellite television channels and on the main Arabic television channels and their history. This includes a study of most prominent Arabic news channels, Al-Jazeera and Al-Arabiya.

The Arab region occupies a large geographical area that is estimated at approximately 13,738,000 square kilometres extending from the shores of the Atlantic Ocean in the west to the Persian Gulf in the east. The total population of the region is over 260 million, according to 1997 estimates. The populations of the 22 individual countries range from 0.6 to 62.5 million, with four countries numbering over 20 million inhabitants and one country, Egypt, with more than 60 million. Bahrain, Djibouti, Kuwait, Lebanon, Mauritania, Oman, Palestine, Qatar, and the United Arab Emirates are below 5 million. Three of them are found in the Gulf area and have populations below 1 million (UNISCO, report, 1999-2000). The Arab countries have many historical, political and cultural similarities. The main link, however, is the Arabic language which is spoken in all Arab countries, despite the different dialects in each country. The absolute control over political, economic and cultural activities exercised by their governments is a prominent feature of Arab countries.

Arab governments consider the media as an important tool in maintaining power via censorship. Hence, in certain countries the media is completely controlled at the behest of governments, whereas in others it has a great degree of say over media content. In spite of the common language spoken in the region, which in theory could create a wide variety in options of print media for Arab readerships, disparities between Arab governments regarding censorship and issues of freedom and

censorship prevent the availability of a common news agenda. This illustrates the nature of Arab government policies toward the media in general, and toward imported news. In spite of these factors, Arab governments continue to set up and support organizations that reinforce the cooperation and exchange of media production and news between the Arab countries and the rest of the world.

Democracy and Mass Media in the Arab Region

Despite the difference in political policies, none of these countries are free from government censorship according to many international organizations. According to the Freedom House Annual Survey of Democratic Governance (2007), Arab countries have a poor record in terms of media independence, civic engagement, effective and accountable government and independent judiciaries (Freedom House website, 2007).

A survey carried out by the Federation of Arab Journalists (2006) in twenty Arab countries dealt with the legislation, censorship and difficulties faced by Arab journalists. Only two countries did not provide data concerning this survey, Libya and Mauritania. The report revealed that legislation in Arab countries was one of the most serious barriers which hampered Arab journalists. Laws are used in many of the Arab countries as a means of the persecution and even imprisonment of journalists.

This report also explores the censorship which takes many forms, that still strangles the freedom of journalists in the region. This includes the permanent instructions to journalists concerning what they should or should not write about. A censor would be available to journalists associations' in order to pre-censor all its items. Also,

censorship could take place even after publication with newspapers and in other media. This is often carried out before the newspapers are distributed.

The measures used by Arab governments against journalists can also be brutal and violent. Intimidation, torture, and even assassination have been common in the Arab region. According to the Federation of Arab Journalists (2005), twenty-five journalists in different Arab countries were killed in 2005. The majority of them were assassinated in Iraq and Lebanon, whereas in other Arab countries they were killed in very suspicious circumstances.

In order to avoid censorship and Arab government suppression, many journalists in the Arab region have launched websites or take part in what has become known as the blogging phenomena. These net blogs provide both journalists and ordinary people with an ideal opportunity to express their opinions. In fact, access to the internet in the Arab region is still limited due to the high percentage of illiteracy and the costs of usage. On the other hand, the internet creates an open society where people can chat and express their opinions freely. Blogs in the Arab region have become a true phenomenon which may illustrate the nature of Arab culture, society and government policies towards any kind of free speech.

There are two main unique characteristics of these types of blogs in the Arab region. Firstly, the majority of blog users disguise their identities. This enables them to express their opinions freely and also allows them to avoid being hounded by their government. Secondly, the majority of subjects discussed in these blogs are; religion, sex, and politics which are also the three main taboos in the Arab region.

On the other hand both journalists and ordinary people who choose not to disguise themselves have encountered many difficulties. The Arab region has witnessed many

cases where bloggers have been persecuted or even imprisoned. Many Arab countries now apply state-mandated net filtering. These countries include Bahrain, Morocco and Saudi Arabia. In Egypt some internet writers have been jailed and given lengthy sentences after accusations that their blogs insulted Islam and defamed the president of Egypt (BBC, 2007). These examples illustrate the atmosphere in which Arab journalists work.

Some of Habermas' arguments about the public sphere (1998) can be seen as highly relevant to the issues of democracy and the mass media in the Arab region. The central theme of Habermas' vision of democracy is the public sphere, which "In short, was and remains the source of that public opinion which must legitimate authority in any real democracy" (Rutherford, 2000, p18). According to Habermas, the public sphere is based on the rights to gather and articulate the needs of society with the state. This means that the public sphere generates opinions and attitudes which will guide the affairs of the state. Habermas argues that "these rights, which are meant to guarantee everyone an equal opportunity to pursue his or her private conception of the good, have an intrinsic value, or at least they are not reducible to their instrumental value for democratic will-formation" (Habermas, 1998, p260).

The public sphere enables people to form a realm of public opinion that could oppose the state power. This means that the public sphere acts as a shield against the state that exerts arbitrary forms of power. The absence of the public sphere, which consists of organs of information, free discussion, and the rights to other democratic activities, would then represent a violation of basic human rights. We may argue here that the new technology of satellite channels in the Arab region has created a kind of democratic atmosphere so that the Arab audience can now receive many alternatives. However, this does not mean that the Arabic media are better if either state-owned or privately owned. In many cases, it is possible to watch political debates and other

programmes, but the participation in such debates may incur risks and face difficulties. In fact the Arab region has a poor record in terms of human rights and freedom of speech.

According to Habermas the eighteenth century was ideal in terms of democratic media, where the news used to be discussed in coffee houses. By taking the eighteenth century as a standard in terms of the freedom of the press and freedom to discussion, we could highlight three main aspects in Habermas's argument with regards to this issue. Firstly a free press could deal with all issues of general concern. Secondly, free discussion exists where people are able to express their opinions freely. Thirdly, the forum or the atmosphere where people meet and discuss the press contents in face-to-face discussion. The new technology provides Arab audiences with the content, but it would be difficult to meet or gather to discuss these issues with others due to the absence of a democratic atmosphere in the Arab region.

This means that the new technology of satellite channels has removed the Arab governments' firewall and state monopoly over the mass media. However, a democratic atmosphere in the Arab region remains absent, which creates a formidable difficulty for both the mass media and their audiences. This issue is discussed in depth later in this chapter taking Al-Jazeera as an example. There is no doubt about the necessity of a democratic atmosphere in which the mass media could operate and flourish. However, that does not mean democracy is a precondition of successful mass media. There are many examples which prove this argument. The Arab region is now witnessing a different atmosphere after the emergence of satellite channels which provide the Arab audiences with a variety of options. Arab audiences can now watch free and democratic debates provided by many channels even though they live under oppressive regimes.

The main point here is that technology provides Arab audiences with a substantial opportunity to have access to information which is free from the government influence. However, there are other aspects that remain absent which hamper the fulfilment of an ideal public sphere. This includes the rights of free speech, free press and assembly and the right to participate freely in political debates and decision-making. On the other hand taking Arab satellites channels as an example could be useful in terms of the opportunity provided by technology and the principles of the free market, where peripheral countries could establish competitive mass media particularly in terms of news coverage.

Unfortunately, the democratic atmosphere created by satellite channels in the Arab region for the last few years seems to have reached a cross road recently. The Arab governments showed their dissatisfaction towards the independent or quasi-independent satellite channels which managed to create a sense of diversity in terms of political debates. The Arab media ministry had an emergency meeting in Cairo in February 12th 2008 to impose new restrictions on satellite channels and to tighten the leeway on political debates on these channels. The new policy was adopted in particular by Saudi Arabia and Egypt. This new rule is; corporate 13 article aims to regulate Arab satellite channels in the region. It also set up new principles for political programmes on these channels. According to the new rules all Arab satellites should respect Arab governments and avoid any severe or harmful criticism to any Arab countries leaders and also be free from inciting terrorism. In fact, under this new role Arab governments would have the upper hand over the media and could ban, confiscate, close and withdraw licences of any channel considered as rouge channel.

Even though Arab media ministers did not name particular channels, many Arab journalists considered Al-Jazeera as the main target of this new regulation and probably this is way the Qatari government was the only Arab government which did

not agree with this new regulation. This new policy has been widely criticised by Arab journalists and considered to be a backward step in terms of freedom of speech.

The Al-Quds al-Arabi newspaper severely criticised this new regulation. “ The author of the new regulation who call themselves media experts in the Arab governments enveloped this regulation with glossy terms, such as banning the encouragement of depravity and refraining from offending God, religious symbols and confessions, and God’s messengers. However, it is obvious that this amounts to potting poison into honey. The primary aim is to muzzle Arab voices that demand freedoms, respect for human rights, fair and direct elections, just and independent judiciary, and fair distribution of wealth”(Arab Media & Society, 2008). This new move by Arab governments illustrates the nature of these governments and their dread from any democratic forum. Political debates and programmes which reveal corruption or repression are the main threat to Arab governments. Many believe that entertainment channels which are full of indecent programmes contradict Arab culture and principles of many conservative societies in the Arab region and yet these channels are not targeted by the new rules and regulations.

The majority of entertainment channels in the Arab region are funded by Arab governments in order to achieve certain political agendas as Al-Quds al-Arabi (2008) argues:

“Licentious satellite television channels are spreading like smallpox in the face of the Arab media. They ruin the minds of the new generations, spread depravity, and arouse instincts. Most of these channels are funded by the states that adopt the new media regulation or by businessmen close to them. We do not believe that these channels will face any restrictions or harassment in the future

because they operate in the framework of a policy, which is well studied by corrupt Arab regimes. These regimes seek to divert the attention away from their corruption, dictatorship, repression, and failure to perform their national and religious duties in liberating the land, by launching more of these channels” (Arab media & Society, 2008).

The usage of vague phrases like ‘inciting terrorism’ also illustrates a serious threat to the principles of democracy across the world. Slippery concepts such as these could be easily used by dictatorships and repressive regimes to crack down on any form of opposition or banned mediums that would provide platforms to opposition. Ironically the British prime minister used anti-terror laws to freeze all UK-held assets of the Icelandic bank Landsbanki after it collapsed as a result of the global financial crisis in 2008 (BBC,2008). Many believe it is now very easy in many Arab countries to label political opposition as terrorists to justify torture and oppression and also to prevent the rest of the world from showing any sign of sympathy towards them.

The Common Characteristics of Arabic Mass Media

The Low Rate of Access to Mass Media

The Arab region is considered to have one of the lowest rates in the world of access to media in relation to its population. According to a Human Development Report sponsored by UNESCO (2003) the Arab region has the lowest access to the press. For example, there were less than 53 copies of journals for every thousand people, and in some Arab nations the situation was even worse. In Somalia, for example there was only one journal for every thousand people.

In the field of radio there is a considerable gap between the Arab countries and the developed countries. In Lebanon, for example, which is considered as the best Arab nation in the field of radio, the access rate were 678 radios for every 1000 people, whereas the average rate in the developed countries is 1280. In the field of television, Oman had the highest rate in the region with 641 TV sets for every 1000 people whereas in Syria there were only 67 for every 1000 people. In Tunisia the figure was 198 and in Egypt 189 (UNESCO, 2003).

On the other hand, the availability of satellite channels is less disappointing in the Arab region. In fact, there are 120 free TV channels on the Arabsat and NileSat satellite stations. 70% of these channels are controlled by Arab governments and are broadcast in Arabic. There are also other private Arabic channels which represent 15% of all Arab satellite channels.

The Absence of Independent Sources of News

Unfortunately it is very difficult to gain access to or to set up private sources of news free from any government influence. In the Arab region all the sources available are either fully controlled by governments or are under their watchful eyes. Although all Arab nations have news agencies, these unfortunately tend to be used as vehicles of propaganda for governments and pander to their policies. This affects the quality of news stories and their impartiality. Otherwise there is a lack of professional news agencies which provide specific types of news services such as concerning economics or the environment. There is also a lack of archives among the majority of the Arab mass media. Only a few associations in the Arab region, such as Al-Ahram in Egypt or Al-Nahar in Lebanon can be considered to have significant archives.

The Weaknesses in News Coverage

The Arab governments interfere in news stories by imposing particular points of view, usually to suit their own political agendas. This makes Arab news agencies and other sources of news unreliable and unattractive. News stories covering government activities usually merely praise their achievements.

The Strong Restrictions on News Coverage

Arab governments use different strategies in order to restrict mass media coverage. Censorship is the most common measure used to influence Arab media content, particularly in the field of news. Using legislation and imposing very strict punishments makes Arab journalists scared of publishing or broadcasting news which may anger the government. This kind of self-censorship creates a kind of reliance on government guidance, which leaves the majority of Arab mass media is unable to take the initiative in the field of news. Instead they wait for the government to guide them and set the priorities in their news coverage. On the other hand Arab governments use rather ambiguous justifications for restricting news coverage. These usually concern the so-called national interest, which is very difficult to identify.

Poor Infrastructure

In spite of having abundant natural resources such as oil, the Arab region generally has very poor infrastructure, which strongly affects mass media performance. In news services in particular, high speed communication as well as efficient transport is needed in order to facilitate news coverage across the region. The Arab region has some of the poorest telecommunications services in the world. For example, in the Arab region there are only 109 telephones for every 1000 people, whereas the rate in

developed countries averages 561 for every 1000 people. Transportation problems such as high prices and poor services are another factor which restricts news coverage and makes it difficult for the news to be on time and effective.

The Arab Media's Collective Strategy

The Arab nations have set up certain measures in order to work collectively. The Arab League is the prime organisation that demonstrates these efforts. It was created in 1945 as a means of establishing and unifying the Arab states politically, culturally and economically. The League of Arab States is the second oldest continuously existing inter-governmental organisation of its kind, and only the Organisation of American States (a continuation of the Union of American Republics) has a longer history (Macdonald, 1965, p281). In the field of media, the Arab League has three main bodies.

The Arab Ministry of Media

This committee contains the ministry of Arab media and has an annual meeting to discuss Arab media issues, build long term strategy and make plans to improve the Arab media and support the flow of media between the Arab countries and internationally.

The Arab States Broadcasting Union (ASBU)

This was set up in 1969 and its headquarters are in Tunisia. It seeks to assist in the development of communication technology in the field of radio and television and to develop and reinforce all forms of technical cooperation among member organisations.

One of the main aims of the ASBU is to exchange news between the Arab countries. Hence in March 1987, the members set up the Arab News and Programme Exchange Centre to coordinate daily audio and video exchanges between members as well as covering the major news and programming events. However, this organisation faced some obstacles regarding political differences which hampered its effectiveness. The ASBU intends to achieve the following aims:

“The system shall devote its greatest attention to the content of the news material exchanged through it, and in all cases, shall ensure:

- A. That this material shall reflect the interest of the Arab man, deepen his belief in the unity of objectives and destiny of the Arab nation, develop common trends in the Arab homeland by disseminating information thereon, its message and potentialities, while stressing and supporting the cause of its struggle.
- B. That this material shall abide by the provisions of the Arab Broadcasting Charter, namely to conform to the truth, to be accurate in the selection of sources, to be just and unbiased, to avoid sensational or exciting details which are not necessary for the realistic rendering of news items.
- C. That this material shall not be confined to hot news but cover all fields of social, cultural, economic and other activities.
- D. That this material exchanged with other regions of the world, either incoming or outgoing, shall reflect the necessity of acquainting people with one another and of deepening the spirit of human brotherhood” (Boyd & Rantanen, 1998, pp212-213).

The Arab Satellite Communications Organisation (ArabSat or ASCO)

Emerged in 1978 and the headquarters are in Riyadh. This organisation seeks to improve the Arab communication and satellite technology, and supports the exchange of media production and news between Arab countries. One of this organisation's achievements is the launch of ArabSat. "ArabSat evolved from a 1953 Arab League agreement to develop regional telephone, telex, and telegraph telecommunications" (Hudson, 1990, p187) The three highest shares of ownership are Saudi Arabia with more than 50 per cent, Kuwait with 35 per cent and Libya with 8 per cent (Hudson, 1990, p187). Many obstacles have faced ArabSat, some of them technical such as poor broadcasting and receiving equipment.

The main reason, however, for the ineffectiveness of ArabSat was the political contradictions between Arab states. Consequently the utilisation of ArabSat was limited to broadcasting recorded programmes which allowed Arab governments to pre-censor. The history of Arabsat has faced many obstacles, because of the contradictions between Arab government policy and practice. This means that direct satellite news coverage is restricted and controlled. The governments are highly selective about what is broadcast live. The usage of this satellite system has been very limited. It was mainly used for non-live programmes which allowed governments to censor broadcasting. However, Arab governments were not able to maintain this control for long, as new technology became more widely available to the public.

The Main Tools of News Reception in the Arab Region

The reception of news in the Arab region can be divided in two main categories. The first includes the kind of sources which are under the control of governments, where the news is usually controlled and highly censored. The news which is usually allowed

by the Arab governments is in favour with their policies. The second category includes sources which go directly to the audiences so that government is not applied censorship. The main sources in the first categories can be divided into the following.

News Agencies:

In spite of a long history, the majority of Arab news agencies have had limited effectiveness in news coverage because of many technological obstacles and a lack of finance. The history of Arab news agencies dates back to 1945, when the Sudanese news agency was established. In 1956 the Egyptian news agency the Middle East News Agency (MENA) was established and other Arab agencies followed in 1959. News agencies established then included the Iraqi News Agency, Algeria Press Service, Tunis Afrique Press, Maghrib Arab Press (Morocco) in 1964, and the Jordan and Syrian news agencies in 1965. On the other hand in the 1970s news agencies were established in the Arab Gulf region including in Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Kuwait, and United Arab Emirates and also in Yemen and Palestine (Mellor, 2005, p37).

According to Mellor (2005), "Arab news agencies fail to provide a rich source of Arab news to Arab media and thereby reduce their dependence on foreign (western) news sources. The agencies' preoccupation with serving the existing regimes or covering routine, local news that is hardly an exchange item for other Arab news agencies is among the reasons for this failure. Another reason, however, is the lack of careful pre-planning common to the whole media sector in the region. The establishment of these agencies was not preceded by careful strategic planning on the part of the founders (governments) regarding the goals and means for achieving them; rather they were regarded as a sheer indicator of Arabs' efforts to modernize their countries" (Mellor, 2005, p46).

Radio and Television

Radio and television broadcasting in the Arab states are completely monopolised by governments for three main reasons. First, broadcasting is given more priority than the printing press because of its ability to reach all citizens, regardless of their education. Thus illiteracy, which is a filter to the access to the print media, does not prevent access to radio and television programmes, which are usually made in the local vernaculars. Second, these media play a major role in sustaining national unity and spreading a feeling of community among citizens. Thirdly, electronic media may serve as the main instrument in the political propaganda machine, which would be dangerous in hostile hands (Amin, 2001, p29).

According to Amin (2001), Arabs rely heavily on oral culture; therefore the importance of the radio is quite substantial. Most households in the Arab world have at least one radio. Radio broadcasting started in many of the Arab states quite early compared with the other mass media in the region. Algeria started its radio broadcasting service in 1967 as a service for French colonists. In Bahrain radio broadcasting started in 1955, whereas in Egypt it began in 1934 and in Iraq in 1958, Jordan in 1950, and Kuwait in 1961 (Amin, 2001, p30).

Arab governments realized the great influence of radio after the Egyptian revolution in 1952 when Nasser (1952-1970) became the president of Egypt and portrayed himself as the leader of the Arab world. Arab audiences were attracted to his leadership and charisma and other Arab governments strengthened their efforts to restrict the influence of Nasser. Television is a very important medium in nearly the entire Arab world. Television broadcasting started in the Arab world in the 1950s. It was introduced in Morocco in 1954, in Algeria, Iraq, Lebanon in 1956, and in Libya in 1968. It then spread to other Arab countries during the 1960s and 1970s (Amin, 2001, p30). The

Arab countries may be divided into four categories according to when television broadcasting started (see Appendix D).

Print Media

We can differentiate between two types of print media. The first takes the form of print media run by Arab governments, and the second ones are Arab print media not based in the Arab region.

Government-run Print Media

Historically, the print media in the Arab region were established during the occupation of Egypt, when France established the first newspaper in the region in 1800. France then established many newspapers in the Maghreb countries (Morocco, Algeria, and Tunisia) as well as others in Lebanon and Syria. The Turkish Empire established many newspapers in the Arabic language during its occupation of the Arab region, such as *Al Waqia al Misriya* (Egyptian events) in 1928 and in Iraq the *Jurnal Al Iraq*, published in 1816 (Amin, 2001, p24). The Arabic newspapers were used as tools to support the occupations and were usually full of opinions and articles directed to the high elite.

The high level of illiteracy was the main barrier facing the print media in the Arab region. The real beginning for the Arabic newspapers is the period after the independence of Arab countries. The press after this period in most countries came under the control of the governments which considered the media as a tool to serve their political and nationalist purposes.

According to Rugh (2004) the Arabic print media can be categorised into four systems (see Appendix E). The first system is mobilisation whereby the ownership is by an

agent of the regime, is loyal to the government and actively supports government policy.

The second system is loyalist. Despite being privately owned, loyalists support the ruling political power. In the third system diverse media are permitted to offer a more even representation and criticism of the ruling group. The fourth system is transitional, being controlled by both private and government agents and offering varied and diverse content. According to Rugh, the development of the transitional system is not yet clear. (Rugh, 2004, p134). I believe this system is a fair and accurate representation of all Arab mass media.

The Émigré Arab Print Media

The first émigré Arab newspaper, *Mir at al Ahwal* (the Mirror of Events), was published in 1855 in Turkey, and was utilized by its founder, Rizqallah Hassouna Al Halabi, as a channel to publish his political essays criticizing the policies in the Ottoman Empire. This led to the closing of the publication within one year of its birth (Hafez, 2001 p28).

The last three decades have witnessed a new phenomenon in the Arabic print media where some Arabic newspapers and magazines have emigrated to London or Paris. There are different reasons behind this emigration. Some Lebanese newspapers emigrated as a result of the war, whereas the reason for others is to find a climate of freedom far from government control and for the safety of staff. According to (Mellor, 2005), Arabic newspapers issued from European capitals can be divided into three types: Firstly, Newspapers founded by Arabs who have immigrated to other countries for the purpose of consolidating their relations with their home countries. Such newspapers do not adhere to ideologies or serve national interests, but are usually

specialized publications serving religious, cultural, or social purposes. Examples are a number of publications founded by Yemenis residing in Indonesia and Singapore, or those published by Lebanese in Latin America.

Secondly, Newspapers and publications founded by national institutions abroad to serve as an extended arm of national propaganda. Some of these publications have also moved outside the Arab region for technical and marketing reasons: Al Sharq Al Awsat, for example. Finally, newspapers that had to move outside the region due to the deterioration of the security situation in their home countries. These are the only types that deserve to be called the 'émigré press' Among these publications are those of the Lebanese who emigrated to London, Paris, Cyprus, and other places, fleeing from the civil war in Lebanon between 1975 and 1990 (Mellor, 2005, p62). The print media which are imported from other Arab countries or from abroad are not reliable sources of news because of censorship. In all Arab countries the print media available use the kind of sources which favour the government. Moreover, despite the differences between the print media run by governments and the émigré print media, neither are significant sources for Arab people.

The second type of news sources can reach Arab receivers directly without the control and censorship of Arab governments. This is due to the nature of these sources. There are categories of these sources as follow;

International Radio Stations in the Arab Region

International radio stations such as the BBC, Voice of America (VOA) and Deutsche Welle (Voice of Germany) have played significant roles in the Arab region as the main sources of news to Arab audiences.

There are many reasons behind the success of these stations and their popularity, but the objectivity and the reliability of news coverage are the main reasons. International radio deal with events and issues that concern Arab audiences but which are usually neglected by the Arabic mass media. The Arabic media are highly controlled by governments, which lead them to be little more than mouthpieces serving the governments and pandering to their policies.

By neglecting current affairs and the events which concern the Arab audiences, the Arab media in fact encourage their reliance on foreign sources of news. The international radio stations used to be the only sources of news for Arab audiences which free from government influence. However, a new era started when new technology enabled people to watch a variety of channels from across the world. Meanwhile, Arab governments continued to censor and control their media in order to avoid any kind of opposition to their policies. The print media is the easiest way for censorship to work, particularly in terms of imported print media. Because of its nature it is easier to ban, and its availability therefore depended on its attitude toward government policy.

The Arab governments have used different methods of censorship. Banning is the first option for any newspaper or magazine which publishes any kind of opinion not in favour of government policies. The only sources which were out of government control were the international radio stations. These radio stations were the main sources of news until the emergence of satellite television channels.

The Internet

The majority of Arab countries were only connected to the internet by the mid 1990s. This was due to anxieties of Arab government about this phenomenon as well

as some technological barriers. According to Kirchner (2001), the smaller Gulf countries (Kuwait and the UAE) have the largest number of host computers registered under their own domain (Kirchner, 2001, p146).

The internet allows easy access to information supplied by other countries. This not only has educational and commercial effects but is also politically controversial in countries with limited freedom of speech. “Another significant factor in the south’s disadvantage within the ‘global information society’s is the fact that English is the language of the internet and will continue to be for the foreseeable future. Languages such as Arabic, which do not use the Latin alphabet, need the appropriate software to be reproduced on the user’s computers. Suppliers often choose graphics to solve this problem, but this causes longer transmission intervals and huger costs” (Kirchner, 2001, p141).

Gruhler discerns five levels of restriction on the internet (see Appendix F). Arab countries are only found on levels three to five (see table 5). Egypt, Tunisia and the UAE are on level three, which corresponds to the level of restriction in Germany. Gruhler places Jordan, Qatar, and Kuwait on level four (with censorship through filtering systems), which is the same as Hong Kong or Indonesia. Saudi Arabia and Iraq are, like China, on level five, which indicates that those countries impose access restrictions (Kirchner, 2001, p151). The Arab countries usually justify these restrictions as necessary measures to protect cultural identity. However, in fact, Arab governments worry about any kind of opposition which would change its policy.

The New Era of Television Satellite Channels in the Arab Region:

The International Channels' interest in the Arab Region

The core countries have long experience in the field of radio in the Arabic language, particularly the BBC, DW, and Voice of America. These radio stations used to be the main sources of news for Arab audiences. Nowadays, satellite technology is facilitating television services which may overlap with radio services, particularly in the field of news. Many international channels provide a few hours per day for news services in Arabic. Such channels include France24, the Italian channel RIA and the German channel DW, whereas Russia has established an Arabic-language satellite news channel called Russia Today (Rusiya al-Yaum), which presents Russia's views of the world and aims to reach 350 million viewers in the Middle East and North Africa.

On the 7th of March 2008 the BBC established a new Arabic language called BBC Arabic TV channel which aims to reach a wide range of Arabic audiences and to compete with the main Arab channels such as Al-Jazeera and Al-Arabiya. The channel broadcasts 12 hour daily and is intended to shift to a 24 hours service later in 2008. The channel has an annual budget of US \$50m (UK £25m). This comes partly from a UK government grant, and partly from BBC World Service funds freed up by the closure of radio services mainly to Eastern Europe (BBC, 2008).

The establishment of this channel is the BBC's second experience in this field. The BBC had earlier established an Arabic channel together with the Saudi company Orbit, which collapsed in 1996. Many believe that the new BBC Arabic channel has come too late, particularly when taking the BBC's Arabic radio service experience is taken into consideration. In fact, the BBC Arabic radio service was one of the main sources of news in the Arab region before the emergence of satellite channels in the 1990s.

The plan for the new BBC Arabic channel came to light in 2005, when 10 radio stations mostly serving former Eastern European bloc countries were closed down. This provided solid potential funding for the new channel. The BBC Arabic channel would then rely on the BBC's network of more than 250 correspondents in 72 bureau around the world. This provides the channel with a great potential in terms of news coverage across the world (BBC, 2008).

Broadcasting in Arabic may be considered a sign which proves that the Arab region is becoming significant to all international news channels, particularly those from the core countries. On the other hand, news services in Arabic are an additional option for Arab viewers who now have a variety of options in the field of news as well as political analysis.

In fact there are many possible interpretations behind this phenomenon. The establishment of these new services could be considered as part of a new international policy towards the Middle East after September 11 2001. In fact the events on and after 11 September have had a profound influence on the broadcasting and consuming of news. As Gillespie (2006) pointed out, "Knowledge of these momentous events has been mediated, to a very large degree, by national broadcast news. However, for an increasingly large number of viewers, satellite television news channels have offered a broader range of views and sometimes a different political sensibility and analysis of these events. This has provided new dimensions to the ways in which viewers, of whatever cultural or social background, gain access to and use news" (Gillespie, 2006, pp903-921).

Whether they serve Arab and Muslim communities in the core countries or the Arab region itself, news services in Arabic may be considered as a profound step forward in creating diversity and a healthy environment for the news by covering it from different

perspectives. Some may consider the significance of the Middle East as a strategic region for the core countries, so that these latter compete to have good ties with the Middle East. This could be another reason behind the core countries' interest in the region. Some may argue that the Arab region is becoming a significant market with great future potential leading the core countries to work to expand their markets there using all possible means and particularly with the mass media, in order to gain more benefit not only by selling their goods but also by blocking Asian contenders from countries such as China, Korea and Japan.

Even though the news services in Arabic are broadcast by international channels, it is still limited. Varying from 4 hours to 8 hours per day, this benefits Arab audiences in that the more news stories and points of view are available, the more democratic an atmosphere is developed. The American interest is quite different. Since September 11, America has initiated a new media policy in the Middle East as an attempt to bridge the gap which opened as a result of the American War on Terror and its interference in Afghanistan, Iraq and Somalia. America has desperately tried to use all available political, economic and cultural means in order to improve its reputation in the region and to ease hostility towards its policy in the Middle East. Hence, America has reinforced its efforts and set up Arabic channels and radio services to achieve its aims. On the other hand, the success of Al-Jazeera also urged America to set up these alternatives in order to combat its influence and counter other Arabic channels such as Al-Manar TV, which is usually branded by the American government as a vehicle for inciting terrorism in the region.

America has reinforced its efforts since September 11 in particular and the American involvement in many conflicts in the region such as Iraq, Afghanistan, Somali, and Lebanon as well as American support for Israel. September 11th could be the main reason for establishing a new media policy toward the Arab region. In fact America

noticed that the upsurge of hostility toward its policy in the Arab region had not just become a threat to its interest in the region, but could also be a real danger at home. As a consequence, America swiftly reacted by using both hard and soft forms of power to secure its interests and domination. In the Middle East America has established a new Arabic channel called Al-Hura, which means 'the free'. Al-Hura was established in 2004, is available free and is sponsored by the American government. In 2002 America also established an Arabic Radio station called Radio Sawa, which aims to attract Arab youth by broadcasting programmes which usually attract youth, such as music in Arabic and English and sports as well as news (Yaseen, 2004, p89-99). The main aim of these efforts is to improve America's reputation which has suffered as a result of the American wars which come under heading of the 'war on terror'. On the other hand, America has also established Arabic media as a counter to satellite channels such as Al-Jazeera, Al-Manar and the Iranian Arabic channel Al-Alm, which are considered by the American government to be vehicles inciting terrorism.

The Emergence of Arab Satellite Channels

There are many difficult issues to consider when studying Arab satellites TV channels, such as the lack of comprehensive viewing figures. Traditionally, Arab radio and television organisations were state-controlled operations, rendering government solely responsible for technological investment decisions and police's on the basis of political rather than marketplace considerations (Ayish, 2001, p116).

However, the line between private channels and government channels is sometimes difficult to draw. This is due largely to the subsidies supplied by Arab governments to private channels, which this study focuses on in terms of the progress of Arab satellite channels and the changes which have occurred in Arab the media and its reputation around the world.

A new stage of Arab media started in the 1990s. The emergence of Arab satellite channels occurred after the Gulf War, which was covered live by CNN in 1991. The Arab governments didn't take the initiative concerning the improvement of their national mass media. In fact they were pushed by the pressure of new technology, which was becoming cheaper and more widely available.

According to Rugh (2004) there are two main reasons for the new media revolution in the Arab region "First, improvements in technology opened satellite TV to many more viewers, as the better antenna became accessible and affordable. When Arab TV began using satellites in 1985, the dishes were large and expensive, so only the wealthy installed them. The newer technology made smaller and cheaper dishes possible. A satellite dish can be purchased for under \$200 and if necessary one can serve several houses in the neighbourhood. Secondly, when CNN covered the Kuwait crisis of 1990-1991 around the clock, Arab leaders and businessmen who watched it realized that CNN was far more sophisticated and interesting than the existing local Arab TV broadcasts" (Rugh, 2004, p211).

The high levels of illiteracy among Arab audiences were hampering CNN and all international channels in the region. This has led to the neglect of the majority of the audience, instead catering for an elite fraction. The new Arab satellite channels have successfully filled this gap and played a significant role, and have become the main source of news in the Arab region. According to Rugh "The Arab mass media perform generally the same basic function as media elsewhere, but in different ways. The basic function of media can be defined as follows: -firstly, conveying news and information of general interest; secondly, interpreting and commenting on events, providing opinion and perspectives; thirdly, reinforcing social norms and cultural awareness by transmitting information about the society and its culture; fourthly, providing

specialized information for commercial promotion (advertising) or available services; and finally, entertaining (Rugh, 2004, p14).

One of the most common characteristics of Arab mass media is the absolute domination and monopoly by their governments. Arab governments utilize all their power to control and censor mass media. The Arab mass media are often unreliable, particularly in the field of news. They are often accused of covering up government activities, enhancing their image and blessing their achievements. Due to this, Arab audiences rely on international radio channels such as the BBC and Voice of America as longstanding alternative sources of news. Gareeb (2000) argues that:

"Prior to the satellite era, most of the media in the Arab world were considered mouthpieces for governments in power, and most of the daily news bulletins were devoted to the activities of the leader. Consequently many Arabs turned to outside media outlets, such as the BBC, Radio Monte Carlo, and the Voice of America, among others. Many Arabs are thirsty for objective information and diverse analyses and viewpoints on the issues facing their societies, and if the new media outlets fail to deliver they are likely to be ignored. Their popularity, in fact, came about not only because they offered more authoritative news, largely free of governmental control, but more importantly because they were reflecting views and opinions held by many in the area and which are not reflected in the mainstream media" (Ghareeb, 2000, p400).

The technological revolution of satellite channels has made it difficult for Arab states to control the incoming flow of information. Satellite channels have been available in the Arab region since 1985, when Arabsat was first launched. However, Arab countries

did not fully utilize its technology. This was particularly clear with regards to live coverage, as Arab governments dreaded the undesirable political debates that could unpredictably erupt on air.

The new technology of satellite channels has forced the Arab mass media to change its policies and make many significance steps forward. In the past some Arab states tried to restrict or even ban this new technology through different measure. Rugh (2004) argues that, "In the 1990s, in Saudi Arabia and Iraq, the production, importation, sale, or use of dishes was a criminal offence. In 1992 the Saudi government ordered a halt to dish importation at the request of religious authorities and in 1994 banned their use altogether. The Saudi ban was widely ignored, and the number of dishes in Saudi Arabia increased from under 200,000 in 1994 to over one million in 1998. The Iraq ban was very strictly enforced until 2003 when Saddam's regime collapsed" (Rugh, 2004, p220).

Finally, all the Arab states have surrendered to the new technology by trying to improve their channels. Some scholars view these steps as democratic reforms. As Sakr argues: "New media technologies, such as satellite television and internet, are seen as promoting democratic practices. In others, an increase in the voicing of dissent via the media is seen as merely reflecting a wider process of democratization" (Sakr, 2004, p98). However, the rapid development of the technology of satellite channels has made it very difficult for Arab states to control the incoming flow of information. Consequently, Arab governments have yielded to new technology because there is no way to control or disrupt the signals of satellite channels or the internet. On the other hand they still control and censor the newspapers and magazines, which means there has been no improvement in this field in terms of the freedom of speech. According to the Third Annual conference of Arab Press Freedom Watch (APFW) in Morocco 2004,

"The elaborate discussions in the conference disclosed that the state in the Arab world is still adamantly clinging to its policies of restricting the free flow of information, maintaining its ownership of the press and the audio-visual media, defending and propagating laws and legislation to restrict the different aspects of the freedom of expression, the press, publishing, circulation, broadcasting services and TV channels. Despite the colossal and continual progress in information and communications technologies, which has effectively transcended and overstepped the multiple impediments erected by the state in the path of the freedom of expression, and the press, on the global level, the state in the Arab world is still sticking by its guns and insisting on the preservation of archaic laws that restrict the freedom of trade union organization and manipulating the conditions under which journalists are working" (Arab Press Freedom Watch, 2004).

Satellite channels have a significant role in the Arab region because of their potential to overcome the barriers of illiteracy and government censorship. Arab governments usually rely on these obstacles to restrict the flow of information. Some scholars consider that the role of satellite channels resembles the earlier role of short-wave radio (Ghareeb, 2000, p397).

Within a few years this new technology became available and very popular in the Arab region. Since then many TV channels became available and the era of controlling and monopolizing mass media seems to have vanished. According Sakr (2004),

"by 2002 ... the number of households receiving satellite channels was 70-90 per cent in Algeria, Lebanon and Saudi Arabia, 40-50 per

cent in Jordan and Syria and 30 per cent or more in Morocco and Tunisia. By contrast, the number of Internet users in all Arab countries at this time was a mere 1.6 per cent of the population, according to the 2003 edition of the UNDP's Arab Human Development Report. Even allowing for possible under-reporting of internet use at cybercafés, it is clear that the information carried by satellite channels reaches a much bigger cross-section of the community" (Sakr, 2004, p99).

In fact, the spread of this technology is inevitable and has proved very difficult to ban. The CNN coverage of seminal events such as the Gulf war had a direct effect on the region and may have stepped up the spread of this new technology. The Arab region has started a new epoch and many channels have been launched, some of them playing significance roles in the wider world.

There is no doubt that CNN coverage and methods during the first Gulf War attracted the Arab audience to its style of coverage. The viewing of CNN allowed the Arab audience to reassess national Arab news and recognize its inferiority.

This was particularly illustrated in the national media's inability to cover such events close to home. After this period many TV satellite channels became available to Arab audiences and some channels played a significant role, particularly in the field of news coverage. The Arab audiences could now watch a wide variety of international channels. Private Arab satellite channels saw their opportunity and made many channels available in the Arabic language. Many Arab businessmen, particularly Saudis, started this trend and certain Arab governments such as Saudi Arabia backed them. Many channels become available in the Arab region such as MBC, the Arab Radio and Television network (ART) and Orbit, and AL-Arabiya, and all of them are

free to air except for ART and Orbit which are subscription services (Rugh, 2004, p218).

The emergence of MBC in particular made the Arab governments and Arab businessmen realize the potential of satellite channels and spurred them to launch their own. For many scholars MBC is a turning point in the field of Arab channels and has been considered the main source of news in the Arab region for a long time. As Ghareeb (2000) argues:

"A number of new satellite television channels emerged in the early 1990s. The Saudi-owned MBC, the leader in news programs until the emergence of Al-Jazeera, was launched in 1991, with an estimated 3 billion pounds in capital from London by Sheikh Salih Kamil and Sheikh Walid Bin Ibrahim, who had close ties to the Saudi Royal family ... MBC carried credible news and current affairs programs with western-style reporting, and become one of the leaders in news and entertainment programs ... In order to provide a significant new channel, Orbit, another Saudi channel, owned by Al-Mawaried Group, which launched in Italy in 1994, joined BBC to launch an Arabic news channel. However, after a short period this new channel failed to prosper as Orbit from the alliance due to accusations of Saudi Arabian human rights violations. (Ghareeb, 2000, pp402-403).

After private entrepreneurs had established satellite stations, most Arab governments followed suit during the 1990s. Satellite TV channels were created by the governments of Egypt in 1990, Kuwait in 1991, Tunisia and Dubai in 1992, Jordan in 1993, Morocco in 1994; then followed by Algeria, Qatar, Iraq, and others, with Lebanon adding to the list in the year 2000. Their purpose was essentially to take advantage of the new

technology and also to compete with the private ventures that were emerging at that time (Rugh, 2004, p221). The short-lived experience of the BBC Arab service also highlighted the gap in the market for such channels. The Qatari government understood this and established a new alternative. This new alternative has created much controversy and debate around the world. This new channel was Al-Jazeera, which found that a number of professional broadcasters were available after the collapse of the agreement between the BBC and the Saudi channel Orbit in 1996. (Rugh, 2004, p216). The Arab audience are now offered an alternative to the previous government controlled news which was primarily concerned with patriotism and promoting government achievements. Many Arab businessmen have realised the success of Al-Jazeera and the great potential of satellite channels and established new channels some of which are backed by Arab governments (see appendix G).

The Arab News Network (ANN) was established by a business man called Sawmer Al-Assad in London in 1997. A Tunisian business man named Mohammed Al-Hachimi established Al-Mustaqill Television based in London in 1999. Al-Khalifa television based in Paris was established by an Algerian business man called Al-Khalifa in 2002. Also, in 2003 Al-Arabiya was established in Dubai and since then became the main rival of Al-Jazeera (Rugh, 2004, p214).

Al-Jazeera as an Example of the New Era of Satellite Channels

Al-Jazeera is probably the most controversial television channel in the world. It has provoked antagonism and hostility as well as praise and encouragement in many quarters. It is an ideal example of the new phenomena of the influence of satellite television channels, particularly in peripheral countries whose voices were unheard for a long time.

By taking Al-Jazeera as example, this section aims to answer one of the main questions of the research, which is to analyse whether the new technology of television satellite channels could provide a good opportunity for peripheral countries to compete with core countries particularly in terms of news.

“Al-Jazeera, which means “the island” or “the peninsula” in Arabic, broadcasts out of a region with little tradition of a free press. It seeks to be provocative in a region where news reporting is often limited to directives from government information ministries; it is a region where dissent has been tightly controlled so that the political regimes can remain in power. Al-Jazeera has, indeed, revolutionized the media environment in the Arab world by broadcasting what no other Arab news organization dared to: the hard, often harsh truth of Arab life, culture, and politics. Before Al-Jazeera, most Arab regimes broadcasting dictated a steady diet of mind-numbing entertainment and bland, often harmless news and talk shows” (El-Nawawy, 2002, p29).

The mastermind behind Al-Jazeera was the Prince of Qatar who aided the establishment of the station in November 1996 with \$140 million dollars of his own money. His idea was to fund the station for five years until it could reach economic independence from advertising revenue (El-Nawawy, 2002, p33). According to Al-Nawawy (2002) the advertisement revenue in the Arab world was estimated to exceed to an annual figure of \$500 million (El-Nawawy, 2002, p34). Unfortunately, multinational corporations have hesitated in investing in the station, due to concerns over their relations with Arab governments in the region. Al-Jazeera has become a very popular channel, and it's “Official claims that 40 to 50 million of the 300 million Arabs watch Al-Jazeera, including 3 million in Europe and a few hundred thousand in the United States” (Rugh, 2004, p231).

Al-Jazeera is a good example of the potential of satellite channels and their influence over the world, which has given a small country like Qatar the opportunity to play a significant role in the world. Peripheral countries could now seize the opportunities provided by globalization which allow them to harness new technology and enable them to play a profound role politically, economically and culturally.

Qatar is one of the smallest countries in the Arab region, with a population of 744, 500. It has been deemed a good example of what Straubhaar (1991) and Kraidy (2000) call “asymmetrical interdependence. As millions of Arab satellite subscribers throughout the Middle East, North America, and Europe tune in to watch Al-Jazeera, it could be convincingly argued that the network’s influence and impact on international affairs and public opinion is disproportionate to the minuscule amount of power that the Qatari state exerts politically” (El-Nawawy, 2002, p32).

Al-Jazeera has become the Arab people’s channel and can be reliably seen to reflect the viewing tastes and opinions of the Arab people. Jian Al-Jacuby an Iraqi reporter working in the Al-Jazeera newsroom cited in El-Nawawy (2002), “for Arabs, Al-Jazeera is revolutionary. Arab people, for a long time, just wanted somebody to listen to them. That is the importance of Al-Jazeera: to let people talk ...” “Where public expression is often suppressed, Al-Jazeera has become an instrument for both marginal and silenced voices, whether radical or liberal, Muslim or Christian. Its programs often contain fiery debates and arguments that appear to be on the verge of fistfights, but Al-Jazeera’s producers strive to maintain more than a semblance of intellectual rigor as well” (El-Nawawy, 2002, p50).

In fact, almost of Al-Jazeera’s programmes (see Appendix H) are controversial. This is partly due to the live relay of these programmes, and the high level of non-pre-recorded material as well as the participation of people from many different

backgrounds. In fact the live presentation of these programmes has made them more interesting and free from any censorship. The programmes usually analyse very sensitive aspects of religion, politics and cultural issues which are neglected by the government-run media. Some argue that these programmes have created a new environment in the Arab region by allowing different perspectives to flourish. Some may consider this as an ideal environment for democracy, which has been forbidden in the majority of Arab countries. In-fact, Al-Jazeera and its programmes have unified Arab audiences over the world. Arab viewers across the world watch these programmes every evening and have the opportunity to participate in them.

In order to improve its broadcasting Al-Jazeera has launched two additional channels. The pre-pay subscription Al-Jazeera sports channel was launched in 2003 to cover Arab and international sports events. The Al-Jazeera children's channel was launched in September 2005 and seeks to present a variety of children programmes to Arab children over the world. The Internet has become another means for TV channels to improve their services and communicate with viewers by allowing them to express their opinions and criticisms. Al-Jazeera has promoted its website (www.Aljazeera.net) in both Arabic and English.

“The Arab-language companion website to Al-Jazeera was launched in 1998. Like many popular internet sites that accompany new TV programs, Al-Jazeera.net allows users to view live programming through streaming video at no charge. The largest number of visitors to Aljazeera.net comes from Arabic speakers residing in the United States. The website has recently recorded up to 1.2 million daily hits since September 11. Furthermore, the website provides complete, uncondensed coverage, supplemented with complete transcripts of all talk shows that can be read and obtained at no charge. The huge

number of satellite viewers and website users suggest that mainstream Middle Easterners have grown more accepting of progressive ideas and genuine debate” (El-Nawawy, 2002, p67).

Since its launch in 1996 Al-Jazeera has created controversy from opposing sides in the West as well as Arab countries. It is a widely held view in the Arab world that Al-Jazeera is financed and run by Mossad, MI5, or the CIA, so as to undermine Arab unity (Miles, 2006). These different attitudes may be useful in analysing the nature of those countries in terms of their contradictory policies toward the free flow of information. The stances of Western states and almost all Arab governments have been heavily critical. In fact “in June 1999 Al-Jazeera “showed the first televised broadcast of a ninety minute discussion with Bin laden to a mass Arab audience. Since then, Western states and moderate Arab governments have periodically condemned Al-Jazeera for being a supporter of and mouthpiece for the Taliban and Al-Qaeda” (El-Nawawy, 2002, p22).

“Although Al-Jazeera has taken heat from the West in general, the United States has taken special umbrage with the network, citing its willingness to provide airtime to the Taliban and Al-Qaeda, for spreading ‘inflammatory rhetoric’ against the U.S mission in Afghanistan” (El-Nawawy, 2002, p24). Despite the differences and contradictions between regimes and national policies, Arab countries have reacted to certain Al-Jazeera programmes with a consensus in terms of the fear and hostility expressed toward the station. Al-Jazeera's programmes have created different reactions in different Arab states, which illustrates the behaviour of Arab governments, who are not accustomed to democratic, critical opposition.

The Qatari government has received 450 official complaints about Al-Jazeera and its programmes (El-Nawawy, 2002, p114). The “Saudi authorities have adopted several subtle tactics to put pressure on Al-Jazeera. In the spring of 1999, the Saudi

government reportedly asked Al-Jazeera's Saudi-owned advertising agency, Tihama, not to place ads with the network and urged other local advertisers to follow suit. Moreover, Saudi officials allegedly intimidated the one Saudi member of Al-Jazeera's staff into leaving the network in 1999. In July 1999, Saudi authorities banned all satellite transmissions at public coffeehouses in Riyadh, the Saudi capital, apparently to keep Al-Jazeera from the public eye" (El-Nawawy, 2002, p117).

King Abdullah accused Al-Jazeera of "discrediting the GCC countries, harming its members' royal families, threatening stability in the Arab world, and encouraging terrorism" (El-Nawawy, 2002, p118). Saudi Arabia has enforced an economic stranglehold on the channel by encouraging major advertisers not to invest in it. The Al-Tuhama advertising company was the main source of advertising for the channel, but cancelled its contract due to Saudi pressure applied to the company (Miles, 2005, p64). Also some Arab organizations, such as the Arab States Broadcasting Union (ASBU) which monitors the performance of Arab networks, have been very critical of Al-Jazeera. The ASBU rejected Al-Jazeera's December 1998 application for membership. It gave the network six months "to conform to the code of honour of the Arab media," which "promotes brotherhood between Arab nations" ... "Al-Jazeera did not conform, and news of the rejection hit the wire services and the internet like wildfire (El-Nawawy, 2002, p122).

Attacks against Al-Jazeera programmes are not confined to the Gulf States. They arise also from Arab North African states. Morocco accused Al-Jazeera of leading a 'hostile' campaign against its monarchy. As a result, Morocco recalled its ambassador from Qatar on July 20, 2000. (El-Nawawy, 2002, p123). Libya recalled its ambassador from Qatar on April 24, 2000, following criticism of the Libyan policy in one of Al-Jazeera's programmes (El-Nawawy, 2002, p124). Algeria cut electrical power in many

cities to prevent its people from watching an Al-Jazeera programme because of the discussion and the issues raised in that episode (El-Nawawy, 2002, p114).

The rest of the Arab countries have also taken measures against the network. Jordan closed the Al-Jazeera news bureau in its capital, Amman, in November 1998. The Egyptian government reacted differently to restrict one episode of *The Opposite Direction* by preventing some Egyptian guests from travelling to Qatar (El-Nawawy, 2002, p131). On some occasions the network has received criticism from both opposite sides, for example, from Israelis and Arabs over the same issue. Arabs criticise the channel because it allows Israelis to express their opinions and perspectives, which has created anger among those who considered them as crossing forbidden borders. On the other hand, Israel has accused Al-Jazeera of bias and anti-Semitism (Miles, 2006).

In fact Al-Jazeera's main aim is to broadcast opinion, and counter-opinion particularly in such issues like the Arab–Israeli conflict.

“Just as Al-Jazeera has proven willing to present Al-Qaeda’s ‘perspective’, it has also devoted airtime to and welcomed another regional pariah - Israel. The network was the first Arab channel to allow Israelis to present their case in their own words, in Hebrew, English, or Arabic. This move was a major departure from past practices and truly shocked the Arab public. Until Al-Jazeera arrived, most Arabs had never even heard an Israeli’s voice. Al-Jazeera regularly airs clips of Israeli officials within news bulletins and conducts live interviews with six to 10 Israelis each month. The network covers Israeli affairs extensively and is widely watched in

Israel. In fact, Al-Jazeera gives more airtime to Israeli issues than any other channel outside Israel itself" (Miles, 2006)

Arab countries that felt maligned had to resort to more imaginative methods to obstruct Al-Jazeera. Harassing correspondents and obstructing visa requests have been frequently attempted in order to restrict the ability of the channel to operate. Some of its correspondents have faced serious problems and two members of its staff are currently in prison, one in Guantanamo Bay and one in Spain. State-run television companies have refused to share footage or facilities with the network, forcing it to become more technically independent than it might otherwise have chosen to be (Miles, 2005, p59).

The reaction was not just felt in the Arab region, but also from the West. According to El-Nawawy, "Although Al-Jazeera has taken heat from the West in general, the United States has taken special umbrage with the network, citing its willingness to provide airtime to the Taliban and Al-Qaeda, for spreading 'inflammatory rhetoric' against the US mission in Afghanistan" (El-Nawawy, 2002, p2).

In Britain the hostility towards Al-Jazeera was spearheaded by David Blunkett, the former British home secretary who admitted that he had advised Tony Blair to bomb Al-Jazeera's Baghdad television transmitter during the Iraq War. Blunkett considered Al-Jazeera as a legitimate target that is trying to win the propaganda battle on behalf of the enemy (Al-Jazeera, 2006).

America's reaction toward Al-Jazeera was immediate and took many forms. In 2001 Al-Jazeera's office in Kabul was completely destroyed by US missiles. The Al-Jazeera office Baghdad was attacked in 2003 American missiles. Al-Jazeera accused the American government of deliberately targeting them (Al-Qasim, 2004, p120). Though

the United States considers itself as the major player in advocating supporting and freedom of expression throughout the world, but has taken serious steps toward preventing Al-Jazeera from operating. The softest measure was via diplomatic means, as

“U.S. diplomats formally complained to top Qatari officials that Al-Jazeera was giving too much airtime to anti-U.S activities, especially the suspected terrorist Osama Bin Laden. U.S officials also complained that Al-Jazeera provided airtime to experts hostile to U.S policy ... America asked the Qatari Emir Sheikh Hmad during his visit to Washington D.C on October 3, 2001, to ‘tone down’ Al-Jazeera’s inflammatory rhetoric. The Emir said he would consider the U.S. complaints as ‘friendly advice’. He added in a joint news conference with Powell following that meeting that Qatar heard from this administration, as well as previous U.S. admonitions, on this issue. Parliamentary life requires you have free and credible media, and that is what we are trying to do” (El-Nawawy, 2002, p176).

However, the most aggressive reaction against the channel came in the form of military action, when the office in Kabul was hit by U.S missiles. Al-Jazeera claimed that the attacks were deliberate, an accusation denied by U.S officials (El-Nawawy, 2002, p25). Once again, in Baghdad on the last day of the invasion of Iraq in April 2003. Al-Jazeera’s office was attacked by two American missiles, killing one Al-Jazeera correspondent.

The network has never supported violence against the United States. Not once have its correspondents praised attacks on coalition forces in Iraq. The network has never captured an attack on the coalition ‘live,’ and there is no evidence that Al-Jazeera has known about any attack beforehand. Despite claims to the contrary, the network has

never aired footage of a beheading. As for Al-Jazeera's correspondent 'Alouni' who is imprisoned in Spain, no conclusive evidence has yet to be presented to the public. And there is nothing to suggest that the network's funding is illegitimate. Allegations of supporting terrorism remain merely allegations (Miles, 2006). The contradictory nature of the complaints indicate that there is little substance to the allegations of bias, which is a welcome conclusion for Al-Jazeera in spite of the human costs suffered by its staff.

The American hostility towards Al-Jazeera has been widely criticized, even by the American politician Madeleine Albright (2006) the former secretary of state argues that "The Bush administration's hostility towards the Independent Arab broadcasting network Al-Jazeera, for example, is misplaced. Al-Jazeera's audience is precisely the one officials of the United States most need to reach. Instead of attacking Al-Jazeera, our government should be making its finest spokespersons available to appear regularly on the network's shows" (Albright, 2006, p272).

Some believe that the United States has abandoned its hostility and established a new policy towards Al-Jazeera. This new policy aims to influence the channel by planting pro-American figures within its hierarchy as Schechter (2007) argues: "There is a softer way to influence its direction by taking it over from within and it can happen quietly almost as if in slow motion. You 'broaden' some programs, announce new 'guidelines,' issue new edicts reinforcing top-down control, purge some professionals you don't like, and then give more positive unchallenged airtime to backers of US foreign policy. Washington would not be open about any behind the scenes role it is playing in all this for fear of triggering a very negative public reaction" (Schechter, 2007). According to Schechter, (2007) a number of pro-Americans have been appointed in influential posts in the channel as a result of pressure placed on the Emir of Qatar by the United States Administration (Schechter, 2007).

One healthy reaction toward Al-Jazeera was the variety of channels which were launched to compete with the channel. This has created a new climate in the Arab region, and it may be argued that Al-Jazeera has prompted a revolution in the field of television news broadcasting. The Arab channels have promoted their programmes, particularly in the field of news, to compete with these new channels, and Al-Jazeera in particular. After the launch of Al-Jazeera many Arab channels have developed channels with a particular emphasis on news and political issues, which must be considered as a positive reaction to Al-Jazeera.

Some of these Arab channels have promoted their news programs. The Abu-Dhabi satellite channel has increased its news programming to eight hours per day and the Lebanese channel LBC has joined Al-Hayat newspaper to be more effective in the field of news (Rugh, 2004, p214). In order to reduce Al-Jazeera's popularity, the Saudi authorities banned all satellites in public places in Riyadh (El-Nawawy, 2002, p117), and within a few years they established a new channel, Al-Arabia to present a Saudi perspective. To many observers, "the Al-Arabiya satellite channel was launched recently as a rival to Al-Jazeera" (Mellor, 2005, p7). The Al-Arabiya satellite channel was launched by the Middle East Broadcasting Centre as a new alternative to compete with Al-Jazeera. This new channel has become the main competitor of Al-Jazeera in the field of news in the Arab region.

"According to a poll conducted (in May 2005) by Zogby international and the University of Maryland, Al-Jazeera is the first choice for 62 percent of satellite news viewers in Jordan, 66 percent in Egypt and 44 percent of satellite in most countries in the poll, Al-Arabiya came in a distant second ... 39 percent of satellite-news viewers said they watched Al-Arabiya almost daily" (Shapiro, 2005).

Al-Jazeera's political programmes, such as Al-Ittijah al-muakis 'The Opposite Direction' and Al-Rayy al-Akhar 'the Other Opinion' provide a platform for a variety of political discussions. Many of these subjects were once taboo in the Arab region.

America established a new alternative (Al-Hurra) and Radio Sawa in the Arabic language in February 2004. Al-Hurra is an American channel, backed by the US government. Its chief role is to promote United States foreign policy in the Middle East. In fact, the US has realized the significant role of Al-Jazeera, and thus needed to fill the gap which CNN and other American news channels had left. The variety of these channels in the Arab region have benefited the Arab audience in offering the availability of a variety of options.

The revolution in new technology of satellite channels has served Arab audiences who were previously deprived of watching news and political programmes with different political viewpoints. The Arab audiences had been unimpressed for a long time by the Arab domestic mass media, because of the monopoly of Arab government control. On the other hand, the international radio channels were attractive to people because they offered a variety of perspectives.

The Expansion of Al-Jazeera

Following its success across the world as a significant news source, Al-Jazeera has expanded its services in a range of other sectors, such as film documentaries, children's programmes and sports programmes. In fact, Al-Jazeera has become an international brand which has gained significant international respect.

Al-Jazeera Sports Plus

This channel was established on the seventh anniversary of Al-Jazeera's inauguration on the first of November 2003. It now has 85,000 subscribers in 23 countries in the Middle East and North Africa. This channel aims to provide its subscribers with sports news and analysis, as well as live coverage of sports events regionally and internationally.

Al-Jazeera English

This service is considered as the English version of Al-Jazeera; however, there are some differences between the two channels. The English channel is more interested in global issues whereas the Arabic channel has a more regional focus.

Al-Jazeera English was launched in November 2006 and aims to reach over 80 million viewers across the world. The channel provides its service by satellite and cable as well as broadband. Al-Jazeera English is based in the Middle East but also broadcasts from studios in Doha, Kuala Lumpur, London and Washington.

Al-Jazeera Documentary

This channel was launched on 1st January 2007, broadcasting in Arabic and with its headquarters in Doha. The channel presents high quality documentaries on a range of subjects, particularly politics and history, and aims to provide its viewers with truthful films which analyze political issues and historical, scientific, artistic and religious subjects. The channel also contributes to and supports the documentary industry by encouraging new talent in this field as well as working closely with professional film makers. By providing high quality films in different subjects the channel has become

very popular in the Arab region, particularly when we take the high percentage of illiteracy in the Arab region into consideration.

The Al-Jazeera children's channel

This channel was established in September, 2005, and presents its programmes in Arabic directed to children across the region. The channel produces nearly 40% of its own programmes and aims to provide children in the Arab region with entertainment, knowledge and cultural programmes. The channel also aims to build bridges between Arab children and the rest of the world and to provide them with useful programmes which could help them in their future lives.

Al-Jazeera Direct

This was launched on April 15, 2005 and it aims to broadcast live coverage of regional and international events and press conferences across the region. Al-Jazeera has developed its policy in the western Arab region and established a new office in Rabat. This has enabled the channels to broadcast live coverage from Rabat and host many Arab senior, eminent figures from this region. This step gives the Western Arab countries including Algeria, Mauritania, Tunisia, Libya and Morocco, an ideal channel to put its news into the Arab agenda. News in this region is usually marginalized by many Arab channels because the majority of prominent Arab channels are broadcast and funded by Eastern Arab countries, particularly the Arab Gulf States which usually pay less attention to Western Arab Region States and their issues.

By broadcasting from Rabat, Al-Jazeera aims to reach million of people in the West Arab Region and also in Europe. In fact, the majority of Arab immigrants in France and Belgium are originally from the Western Arab region.

Al-Jazeera also has established new services via YouTube, which enables it to provide audiences with clips of its programmes and also to provide them with a platform where they can broadcast and express themselves freely and comment on the channel's programmes or other current affairs. Since March 2008 Al-Jazeera has started to broadcast clips which can be recorded by viewers.

This measure aims to strengthen the relationship between the channel and its audiences and also to create two directions in the communication process as opposed to the traditional one-way flow of communication from the channel to its audience.

Conclusion

Some organisations in the Arab region have enabled Arab governments to work collectively in the field of media. However, the impact of these bodies remains limited because of the differences between the Arab countries, particularly over political issues and policies. In spite of the early date of the emergence of mass media in the region the Arab people did not consider Arab news sources as reliable. Arab people were highly reliant on radio, particularly international stations. The control and censorship of news in domestic media were the main reasons behind that reliance. The emergence of satellite channels has reshaped the region, particularly in the field of news.

The competition between the Arab satellite channels created a healthy atmosphere by providing Arab audiences with variety of options which enabled them to draw comparison between these various outlets. As a result the state-run televisions have become outdated and old fashioned in both style and content. Many Arab leaders rely on these channels to reach their own people at home particularly in national events where many of them should address their people. Al-Jazeera Direct for example,

provides a live coverage paid for services to meet such demand. This could be considered as an official testament of failure of domestic mass media to reach audiences at home. The Arab media has made significant progress as the availability of new satellite channels has made it difficult to control or censor. However, Arab governments remain in control of the media and censor them. Many options have become available for Arab audiences after the new satellite technology arrived. This has created a wide choice of options. Some of these channels are facing many obstacles which have been created by the Arab governments as attempts to exclude their programmes have occurred.

Al-Jazeera is a good example of the impact of satellite channels domestically and globally, and is also an ideal example of the positive side of globalization which enables small countries to seize their opportunities and set up a remarkable source of news competing with core countries. Al-Jazeera remains a controversial issue nationally and internationally but has managed to spur many countries to compete with it, particularly in the Arab region. This is ultimately to the benefit of Arab audiences. Nowadays, a Variety of options has become available to Arab people.

Arab satellite channels have become a significant alternative for the Arab audience and have eased the domination of core countries in the field of news. Arab satellite channels have spurred the core countries, and particularly the United States to establish new channels to fill the gap, which occurred due to unavailability of channels in Arabic. The wide variety of all these channels now benefits Arab audiences.

CHAPTER FIVE

CHARACTERISTIC & PERFORMANCE OF THE LIBYAN MEDIA

Introduction

This chapter discusses the Libyan media, analyzing their characteristics and discussing the relevant legislation, institutions and corporations which control them.

A further section reviews the progress made in the Libyan media, particularly after the revolution in 1969 which profoundly influenced the contemporary Libyan media's performance. The establishment and progress of the Libyan News Agency, radio, television and print media are also discussed. In order to answer one of the main research questions, this chapter analyzes the difficulties which face the Libyan media and hamper its performance. These includes technical and financial problems which are highly significant and which may play a crucial role in the Libyan people's motives in preferring particular news sources. This chapter also deals with Libyan media legislation and the call for reforms of the mass media.

The Main Legislation concerning the Libyan Media

The Green Book

The Green Book written by Muammar Al-Qadhfi and discussed in the first chapter is the main guide for the Libyan political system and all Libyan legislation. It provides a general framework for the mass media and the freedom of expression. All media legislation is intended to comply with its concepts. This issue will be discussed in greater detail later in this chapter.

The Declaration of the People's Authority

This is considered to be the most significant constitutional bill. It identifies the main principles of the Libyan political system. This bill emphasizes that "Libyan people announce their adherence to freedom and their readiness to defend it" (Elbarasi, 2000, p87). Although this declaration did not specifically the freedom of the press, we may consider that freedom of speech and the mass media is included in this abstract declaration. As Elbarasi (2000) has pointed out: "We may conclude that the introduction of the People's Authority Declaration included the concept of freedom in its general meaning. This is due to the abstract of the declaration itself. Hence the freedom of the press is considered to be one of the main dimensions of freedom included in this declaration" (Elbarasi, 2000, p87).

The Grand Green Charter for Human Rights in the Era of the Masses

This bill was declared by the General Congress of the People in Baida in June 1988. This charter considers freedom as a natural right for every person. Article five makes it clear that,

"The members of the Jamahiriyan society forbid clandestine action and recourse to force in all its forms, violence, terrorism and sabotage. These acts constitute a betrayal of the values and principles of the Jamahiriyan society, which affirms the sovereignty of the individual in the Basic Popular Congresses, guaranteeing him the right to express his opinion publicly. They reject and condemn violence as a means of imposing ideas and opinions. They adopt democratic dialogue as the only method of debate and consider any

hostile relation towards the Jamahiriyan society linked to a foreign instance, whatever its form, as high treason against it" (Elbarasi, 2000, pp88-89).

Also article 19 says that "The Jamahiriyan society is a society of splendour and fulfilment. It guarantees each person the right of thought, creation and innovation. The Jamahiriyan society works for the development of the sciences, the arts and literature. It guarantees they will be disseminated among the popular masses so as to prohibit any monopoly on them" (The Great Green Charter of Human Rights in the Jamahiriya era, 2008). As Elbarasi (2000) argues, freedom of press is also included in this charter and is considered as one of the natural human rights of the freedom of expression. (Elbarasi, 2000, p89).

Law No .20 of 1991 for Enhancing Freedom

This law was issued by the Libyan General Congress on 1st September, 1991. It specifies the individual's rights, particularly in terms of freedom of speech. This law considers the freedom of press as one of the rights of individuals. It also explains that an "Individuals' expression and their rights should synthesize with the principles of the whole society and its orientations" (Elbarasi, 2000, p91).

The Law of the Regulation of Libyan Publication

This legislation provides a framework and abstract principles about the freedom of speech and human rights. In fact, it is the only legislation with specific details which regulates the print media and publications. This law, issued in 1972, is still the main legislation in this field.

Law No. 76 issued in 1972 Regulating Libyan publications

This bill is considered by many journalists and media experts as a significant step forward in terms of freedom in mass media and its regulation. In its first article it mentions the freedom of press and publications which it considers as rights for individuals. Also, this law emphasizes that journalists and writers have the right to express their opinions which should accord with the orientations of the society. This law also considers any pre-censorship as illegal (Elbarasi, 2000, p96). This legislation remains the main bill which regulates the print media, even though some of the clauses in this law have been revoked, as discussed later in this chapter.

The Characteristics of the Libyan Media

There are several critical factors which have to be considered when studying the Libyan media. Firstly, we need to consider the geography and population of Libya, which covers an area of approximately 2 million km sq of which more than 90% is desert. The majority of the Libyan population lives in the major cities. The remainder are scattered across the rural areas of the country. Media access has been limited in some of these areas, particularly to television and print media. On the other hand Libya has its own unique political system, in which popular congresses and peoples committees are considered the only means through which individuals should express their thoughts and opinions. In the Libyan system, other expressive means such as strikes, demonstrations and gatherings outside of work and officially permitted organizations and associations are prohibited by law (Almagrabhi, 2004, p209).

According to Libyan legislation, no private media or political parties are allowed. Abedine (2004) describes the Libyan media as divided into three types:

1. Public media, which are controlled by the Libyan state authorities and rely completely on the government.
2. Professional media: including those published and funded by different professional syndicates and unions.
3. Local or regional media, which are owned and controlled by the Committees for the Media in the various regions and which usually focus on local activities and events.

The institutions and organisations which control the Libyan media are as follows.

- A. The General People's Committee for Media is the body that is responsible for formulating Libyan media policies, and managing and funding the different Libyan media agencies. This committee is chosen by the General People's Congress.
- B. The General Committee for Media in the Counties (Shabayas) is the body that is responsible for managing media in the local municipalities.
- C. The Libyan Jamahiriya General Broadcasting Corporation is the body responsible for managing and directing Libyan radio and television services across the whole country. It also has a supervisory role in the municipal radio stations.
- D. The Department of Press Monitoring this body monitors approves and licenses all local and imported publications including books, magazines, and visual and audio tapes.
- E. The Libyan Press General Corporation is the body that is responsible for publishing and distributing various Libyan magazines and newspapers which often reflect government policies.

- F. The Jamahiriya News Agency (JANA) is the main source of domestic news and the distributor of foreign news. Its publishing arm *Al-Fajer al Jaded*. or 'the New Dawn' arm produces the daily newspaper.

All of these departments and corporations are subsidiaries of the General People's Committee of Media and are funded by it.

Progress Made in the Libyan Media

Progress in the Libyan media can be divided into two stages. The first stage began on 24th December 1951 with the founding of the independent Libyan state. The second began with the fall of the monarchy and the establishment of the Libyan Arab Republic on 1st September 1969.

The first stage had a limited role in terms of the media, as the country relied on foreign sources, particularly the USA who provided it with radio technology.

Radio was the main medium became a highly significant medium due to its potential to reach a large percentage of the population, and even cross the Libyan border. Libyan radio began broadcasting after the amalgamation of Benghazi and Tripoli radio in 1959. Prior to this broadcasting was limited to Tripoli and Benghazi for a few hours per day.

Jamahiriya News Agency (JANA)

In the early 1960s the Libyan government consulted many international experts in order to establish its own news agency. In 1963 UNESCO sent some of its experts in

response to the Libyan government's appeal, to study the possibilities of establishing a national news agency. On October 6th, 1964, the Libyan News Agency Decree was issued with 16 articles which stipulated that the Libyan News Agency should be a public corporation, financed and overseen by the national government. Its "articles denoted that the Agency was to be the only authorised national source of all types of official news and that the private sector would have no access to share or take over its duties in gathering, editing and distributing the information concerning national and international events" (Elfotaysi, 1996, p205).

The main headquarters of the Libyan News Agency is in Tripoli, and it has many other offices across the country. In order to cover all local events the Libyan news agency has established many local offices in cities such as Albeda, Benghazi, Musrata, Sirt and Tobruk, from where local news coverage is pooled. However these branches have many difficulties, particularly concerning technology as well as financial problems, which obviously affect their performance.

JANA has also many offices abroad and correspondents across the world. More than 220 correspondents are employed in cities such as London, Paris, Kampala, Buenos Aires and Dar-Es-Salam (Elfotaysi, 1996, p209). JANA also has offices in Egypt, Lebanon, Kuwait, Syria, Algeria, Morocco, and Mauritania. These offices are supposed to provide JANA with the most important news and to cover all social, cultural, and political activities in these countries. Unfortunately, the correspondents tend mainly to rely on local newspapers and other sources such as local radio or televisions stations and merely fax this information to headquarters in Tripoli. In order to avoid high the cost of establishing offices, some JANA correspondents are attached to Libyan embassies. This creates some difficulties, since these correspondents consider themselves as part of the Libyan diplomatic staff rather than journalists whose duty is to follow and collect news. JANA has regional connections with the majority of the

most important Arab news agencies, such as MAP in Morocco, the Middle East News Agency (MENA) and the Syrian News Agency (SANA). In order to achieve better services in news coverage, it also subscribes to major international news agencies such as Associated Press (AP), Reuters, Agence France Press (AFP), the German News Agency (DPA), and United Press International (UPI).

JANA has also established another source of international news. This source is very simple, based on listening to and recording news. Called a listening unit, this is equipped with audio facilities, and radio and recording equipment. These units aim to record international news in different languages and then to translate and transcribe it. JANA also has access to many international newspapers and magazines, either subscribing to these sources or receiving a summary of the main news stories via its correspondents across the world. JANA is also well equipped with the internet, which enables it to gain profound access to global news in particular. JANA also has a translation unit which is responsible for translating news stories from English and French into Arabic.

JANA publishes a daily newspaper called Al-Fajer Al-Jaded or 'The New Dawn' which aims to provide its readers with up-to-date local and global news stories. We may argue here that, even though the Libyan News Agency has many difficulties in terms of technology and professional staff and correspondents, it still has good access to both global and local news events, receiving a considerable number of news stories each day which give it the opportunity to be a reliable source especially of local and regional news. Unfortunately, censorship is a significant barrier which has prevented the Libyan News Agency from presenting many news stories so that they can be read about or heard of in Libya.

Libyan Television started broadcasting in December 1968, but was very limited and could reach just 0.1% of the country (Alasfer, 2004, p17). In the field of print media 25 newspapers and magazines were published in Arabic and 10 were also published in both English and Italian. Due to limitations of infrastructure, technology, accessibility and distribution, we can describe the first period of Libyan media development as limited in terms of its effectiveness.

In the field of newspapers and magazines, the social impediments in that period included mass illiteracy which resulted in the considerable exclusivity of newspapers and magazines appealing to a minority of literate Libyans. The second Libyan media stage started in September 1969 with the revolution. The discovery and exportation of oil then heavily influenced all fields of knowledge, and indirectly led to an improved education system as well as better mass media.

On the other hand the new Libyan regime used the media widely as a medium to express its new policies within Libya and to the world. In the field of newspapers and magazines, 37 newspapers and 34 magazines are published covering different subjects (Appendix J1, and J2). We could consider this as a success for the Libyan media, providing Libyan people with a wider range of options. Nevertheless many of these publications face considerable difficulties, particularly in funding and indeed survival.

At the present time Libyan newspapers and magazine are facing difficulties in distribution due to the dispersed nature of the Libyan population. As a result this has led to the specific targeting of the distribution of newspapers and magazines to areas of high population density.

Libyan Radio

The Libyan government has given radio high priority since the early 1970s. For example, by 1973 Libya had acquired a number of high power MW transmitters which ranged in output up to 1000kW. In 1978 Libya bought a 2000 kW MW transmitter from Radio Industries Zagreb (RIZ) and this was soon followed by another 2000 kW MW transmitter.

In 1977 Libya began to build up a voice on short wave frequencies as an instrument for projecting foreign policy, but also to enable its citizens living abroad in the West and in other parts of the Middle East to maintain contact with their homeland. There are now short wave transmitter sites at Tripoli-Sabrata (13.11 E x 32.54 N), Sebha (14.50 E x 25.52n) and Benghazi (20.04 E x 32.08 N). The Sebha and Tripoli sites are fitted with low to medium power transmitters (10-100kW), which were mostly installed in the 1970s. The Sabrata site see Appendix I is the most modern and is equipped with several 500 kW transmitters (Wood, 2000, pp148-149).

In fact, during the 1980s Libyan radio was considered to be one of the most powerful Arabic radio bases in the Middle East. It was used to criticise other Arab nations, particularly Egypt during the Anwar Al Sadat presidency and the Arab boycott of Egypt over its recognition of Israel. During this period Libyan radio was accused repeatedly by its neighbours of inciting instability.

Two major contributions to the progress of radio have been made in Libya. Firstly the recognition of the potential of radio led the Libyan regime to use it widely to express its new policies and as a vehicle of propaganda to limit and control public perceptions, particularly in the Arab region. Secondly the Libyan people came to rely on

international radio stations such as the BBC, VOA and WD, particularly in the field of news. These two factors resulted in the Libyan government improving the standard of Libyan radio. As a result, a radio station called Mediterranean Radio was established in Malta as a new alternative for the Libyan people. This was set up in order to compete with the international stations. The Voice of the Arab World was also established in 1973. This radio station resembled Arab Voice, which was established during Jamaal Abd el Nasser's Egyptian regime in the 1960s as a vehicle of propaganda in the Arab world. Arab Voice used to have a huge influence in the Arab region during the period of Nasserism. In fact, Nasser adopted policies of hostility towards imperialism and Zionism and encouraged the setting up of a union of the Arab world.

The potential of radio and its influence encouraged the Libyan government to concentrate on radio more than other mass media. The Nasserism experience was crucial, and its policies were adopted by the Libyan regime. The Voice of the Arab World was its vehicle to express this policy and to incite Arabs to act against imperialism and Zionism. This radio station broadcasts news in English and French as well as Arabic, and it has services directed towards Russia, Bulgaria, Poland, Romania, the Czech Republic and some other African countries. Since 2000 the number of Libyan radio channels has increased to more than 11 stations broadcasting to the different Libyan regions (Alasfer, 2004, p13).

Libyan television

Libya can be considered as one of the Arab countries which established television broadcasting quite early compared to others see Appendix D. Libyan television history stretches back to the early nineteen sixties when the Libyan government drew up

plans for national television. However, due to many changes in government and financial difficulties the establishment of Libyan television was delayed until the end of the decade. In 1968, Libyan television officially started broadcasting in the major cities and in black and white. In fact some argue that the real emergence of Libyan television was in 1969, for two main reasons. Firstly the beginning of oil exportation enabled the Libyan government to overcome the financial obstacles, and television then became a very significant tool for the new regime which took power in 1969.

The Libyan government then developed its television services rapidly by importing new equipment, which improved its ability to reach wider areas of Libya. Libyan television started colour broadcasting in 1979, wisely choosing both the PAL and SECAM colour systems which enabled television programmes to be broadcast which were imported from other Arab countries using either system (Elfotaysi, 1996, p57).

There are now 3 national channels. Libyan TV 1 is the Libyan satellite channel established in 1996 to reach almost all of Europe as well as Middle Eastern countries. The sports channel Al Nadi emerged in 2004 the broadcasting from Tripoli for 7 hours per day. According to Alasfer (2005) both the Libyan domestic TV and the satellite channels broadcast the same programmes for more than five hours per day (Alasfer, 2005, p40).

The Reception of Foreign Channels

The reception of foreign channels in Libya could be divided into three main historical stages. The first stage was during 1970s and 80s, during which period people used to receive foreign signals using their aerials. In the northern region of Libya in particular Italian and Tunisian television channels could be received when the signals were

good, particularly in the summer. The second stage started after the emergence of satellite channels. In fact in the early stage of satellite channels in the mid 1990's satellite dishes were too expensive for the majority of Libyan people, who could only receive satellite channels in two main ways: either by receiving the signal from, a company which rebroadcast the programmes, as mentioned earlier in this chapter, or from their neighbours. In fact many people who owned satellite dishes started to use a specific device which enabled them to send the signal to their neighbours wirelessly.

This also created some difficulties because the reception of the signal usually depended on weather condition. Also in many occasions people could only receive programmes they did not want to watch. This made this kind of reception unreliable. However, this stage did not last long and people did not have to rely on this method of watching foreign channels, as satellite dishes became more common and affordable.

The last stage started when the satellite dishes became easily affordable and commonplace, which enabled Libyan people to receive hundreds of options in different languages.

The Print Media

The Libyan print media have also experienced two significant periods; the first started with Libyan independence in 1951 and lasted until the establishment of Republican in 1969.

In the first period during the era of monarchy the mass media were either under the direct control of government institutions or operated under restrictions which limited their freedom and were strongly influenced by the government, whereas television and

radio were totally owned by the Ministry of Culture and Information. The print media, however, were not totally owned by the government, and between 1952 and 1972 there were 25 independent newspapers in Arabic and about ten newspapers published in the English and Italian languages. By the end of the 1960s the print media were flourishing due to the government's generous funding after the discovery of oil, and also due to the success of the education system which had resulted in reducing the rate of illiteracy. The subsequent increase in the numbers of enlightened and educated Libyans enabled the growth of those newspapers.

The monarchy system had previously succeeded in controlling newspapers through financial assistance, and also by advertisement which the government used to intimidate and control their independence. The government also used to control the print media by threatening to withdraw licences for publishing, which was a very effective measure against any newspaper or magazine criticising the government and its policies (Almaghrabi, 2004, p210).

The second era started in 1969 when the Libyan government established a new policy towards the mass media. In fact the government policies in terms of the private print media changed with the issuance of the Press Law in June 1972, which led to the failure of many newspapers which could not meet the conditions imposed by this law. Under this new system, 29 editors in the mass media were arrested under charges of perverting public opinion during the previous period. Fines and imprisonment were imposed on many of them but none were executed. On some occasions newspapers licences were also cancelled. By the end of 1972, only four newspapers remained, one of which was published in Tripoli and the others in Benghazi (Almaghrabi, 2004, p210).

The narrowing of the range of newspapers was consistent with the new revolutionary system's policies which aimed to control flows of the information to and from Libya.

This policy was enforced through the decisions of the first General National Congress of the Arabic Socialist Union in 1972 concerning press regulation. Such decisions constrained press regulations within revolutionary principles. Since the establishment of the republican era, mass media has become a crucial medium which had to be loyal to the new policy and the principles of this era.

According to Elbarasi, (2000) the majority of Libyan print media in 1969-1977 were political print media aimed to support the government, as the Libyan government was leading the print media directly or indirectly. By analyzing the print media's articles in that era, Elbarasi argues that the print media was free from any criticism to the Libyan government or its policy (Elbarasi, 2000, p76).

The Libyan print media was directed towards particular aims. These aims were to incite the Libyan people to join the revolution and reinforce it until its enemy would be defeated both domestically and externally. Some considered the Libyan government policy towards mass media as vital during that stage of the transformation in the Libyan political system. The revolution was in its early development and print media had to be free from any criticism (Elbarasi, 2000, p77).

According to the new print media law which has remained in force since 1972, the press should be free and individuals should have the right to express their opinions by all possible means, provided that this freedom is consistent with the principles and objectives of the community. Also the law provides that the owner of any newspaper or magazine shall be committed to the revolution, and believe in its objectives and those of the Arabic Socialist Union. These rules were applied to the editors of all newspapers and magazines. Furthermore, the law prohibited newspapers from publishing and discussing state matters and those of secret services as well as any doubts concerning the objectives and principles of the revolution, attacking religious values,

defamation, or the publication of any news which may result in the devaluation of the Libyan currency.

The new law empowered the Ministry of Information with the right to confiscate any publications, newspapers or magazines if they published any material which could affect the stability of the country or its policies or which may encourage disorder and the overthrow of the revolutionary system. But after the publication of the first chapter of the Green Book which included the ideas and concepts of Colonel Qadhafi in relation to the freedom of press and democracy, the legal situation for the press was essentially changed and all private print media were banned. In the Green Book, Colonel Qadhafi lists his views about the freedom of the press and the ownership and management of different information institutions. The Libyan print media as with other mass media is state owned and run by the Information Committee, and the main body responsible for print media is the Libyan General Press Corporation.

In fact there is a degree of contradiction between the Green Book's view of print media ownership and the 1972 legislation. The Green Book considers the popular congresses the only means to ensure free speech and no private mass media are allowed, whereas the legislation of 1972 gives individuals the right to establish their own print media. This led some Libyan journalists to seek licences to publish private newspapers and magazines. However, the Libyan government has not yet issued any such permits.

Nowadays there are many newspapers and magazines (see appendices E1 and E2) which are all state-owned and no private newspapers or magazines are published from within Libya.

Libyan Government Efforts to Restrict Access to Satellite Channels

The Libyan people have experienced three stages of receiving news from abroad. The first period was when they relied completely on international radio channels in the field of news. This stage started when Libya became independent in 1951, and the period lasted until the emergence of satellite channels in the 1990s which reduced the significance of radio particularly in the field of news. The second stage began with the collective broadcasting of Arab states after the Arabsat broadcasting agreement, as mentioned in chapter three. The Libya government attempted to use Arabsat satellites to re-broadcast some Arabic TV programmes after censoring them. This included drama, music and some documentaries, but no news coverage was allowed.

The third stage started with the emergence of satellite channels in the 1990s, when the Libyan people's viewing patterns sidestepped the Libyan government's monopoly over the mass media. The public could then access a variety of options from different countries and with different perspectives.

Libya has developed its media in an attempt to restrict the flow of international media particularly after the emergence of the new satellite channels. Libya has made two significant steps to improve its media. The first is to modernize and develop Libyan media. As a result, more options became available to the Libyan people when 3 television channels and more than 11 radio stations were established. On the other hand, the Libyan media have achieved noticeable improvements in quality, particularly in the field of television. Libyan TV and the Libyan satellite channels have increased their political programming and improved their news coverage. This type of programme now represents approximately 13% of the entire TV schedule, in order to compete with the Arab and international satellite channels.

The second step was when Libya established a new alternative to provide the Libyan people with extra chosen carefully channels. As a result Libya established in 1995 a re-broadcasting company, a state owned company that receives television broadcasts from different channels and then re-broadcasts them to Libyan viewers. The re-broadcast includes censoring to conform to Libyan policies regarding the coverage of religion, culture and Libyan government policy. This company is owned by the Libyan government and provides the Libyan audience with more than 20 satellite channels. This company produces two types of broadcasting. One is exclusively for subscribers, and the other is provided free for Libyan audiences who can receive its signals by aerial. This service broadcasts for 10 hours per day from 12 pm to 10 pm (Alasfer, 2005, p38).

In fact these Libyan efforts have had only limited effects because of the variety which has become available via satellite technology. This is significant because it is affordable and difficult to censor. Therefore it would be better if the Libyan government concentrated on developing the Libyan media so as to be able to compete with the international media. There have been many difficulties facing the Libyan media during recent decades. These can be categorised as follows.

Geography and the dispersion of the Libyan Population

Libya is a large country mostly made up of desert, with a small population and a severe climate. The majority of its population live in the north, mainly in Tripoli and Benghazi. The distribution of the Libyan population is not even relative to its area and this creates difficulties. Due to this fact, distribution in the print media in particular is costly. Due to the geography, reaching areas such as small villages in the Sahara has been a great challenge which has meant that the print media could not reach their

targets in time and therefore could not be a reliable source of news, except in the north and the large cities. The geographical nature of Libya also affects radio and television signals, which means that some villages rely on satellites for receiving local radio and television.

Technical Problems

The Libyan government has followed an uneven pattern of policy toward the mass media. Radio, for example, was given high priority in the early years of the Libyan regime as an effective means for propaganda which could reach a large population across the region. Other media, however, were given little attention, particularly the print media. In fact, Libyan government restrictions on local and imported media have affected the performance of the Libya media, particularly in television and the print media which were free from foreign competition. That policy made the Libyan media the dominant source of information and the only option available to Libyan people, blocking any possibility to draw comparisons between the Libyan and foreign media.

For a long time the Libyan government adopted restrictions and censorship in order to block messages not consistent with its policy and to keep its media in line with the status quo. With the emergence of satellite channels, however, it became very difficult to restrict or control access.

Poor performance and lack of technology have strongly affected the Libyan media, particularly in the field of news. Some newspapers, for example, have no archives or professional staff. The lack of competition created a kind of stultifying atmosphere in which reporters preferred to work indoors and usually provided material without any enthusiasm. Libya has a serious problem in the field of publishing which has led many

newspapers as well as some publishers preferring to publish their work abroad in Lebanon or Egypt. Libyan television also soon found itself in a very difficult situation when it faced competition from Arab and international channels which provide service of high quality and which have professional and qualified staff.

The lack of good infrastructure is another factor which has affected the performance of the Libyan media. In fact, the majority of Libyan cities have poor telephone services and this is creating major problems in terms of communications.

Difficulties Created by the Libyan Media Apparatus

The absence of independent media policy and the integration within the political system and its foreign policy has often created extreme changes of direction in the Libyan media. For example, Libya turned its face to Africa during the Lockerbie crisis and considered Arabs as cowards and highly submissive to America and the West, even threatening to quit the Arab League. The Libyan mass media rather pathetically parroted the changes in policy. Being used as a vehicle for government political agendas, the Libyan mass media has become weak and without character, unable to establish its own ways without reliance on the Libyan government's guidance. In fact, the lack of initiative and independence has created a sense of opaque policy in which the Libyan media easily become muddled and confused and unable to draw lines between the messages directed locally and those directed abroad. Libyan television and the Libyan satellite channels are a good example, both using the same programmes and news stories.

The embargo imposed by the West during the Lockerbie crisis in 1992 strongly affected the Libyan media, and the Libyan government imposed strict measures in

order to limit expenditure, but gave the mass media a low priority. During the embargo, which lasted for seven years, the Libyan media was in absolute seclusion, using technology from the 1980s and suspending all training courses abroad.

Ironically, the embargo was in practice lifted with the advent of the new revolution in technology and satellite channels. This enabled Libyan people to receive a variety of options and draw comparisons between these channels and their own media.

The Libyan people thus found relief and reliable sources of news, in particular those far from government influence. On the other hand, the Libyan government realised its own poor performance and sought effective solutions to improve its media. One of these solutions was to send trainees to gain experience with Al-Jazeera, which ironically, was only established in Qatar in 1990 whereas Libyan television had been established in 1960. On September 2005 in a meeting with Libyan journalists Saif-Aleslam Al-Qaddafi criticised Libyan media performance and called for the abolition of the Ministry of Media because it greatly restricted the freedom of the press. This was probably a sign of a change in direction of the Libyan media and was considered by many Libyan experts and journalists as a first step forward to correcting Libyan media policy.

Legislative Obstructions

The Libyan media legislation is a highly controversial issue, although in some ways it is clearly out of date. In fact the Libyan media is controlled by more than one piece of legislation which has created a sense of contradiction and confusion. The main legislation is the 1972 Charter which theoretically was supposed to have been superseded by the first part of the Green Book and Qadhafi's views on the press.

However the 1972 legislation remains active. For example, the 1972 legislation does not ban the independent press, whereas the Green Book obviously prohibits private media. The green book is clearly considers private mass media “democratically not permissible for an individual to own any information or publishing medium” (Qadhafi, 2005, p25).

However, we may argue that the Green Book’s main concern is about the misuse and monopoly of public mediums against the interests and the principle of the whole society as it can be seen in this passage, “An individual’s expression is his own alone, and a corporate body’s expression expresses only the interest or viewpoint of the group. A tobacco producing or distributing company for example expresses the interests of parties comprising the company, i.e. those who are making profit from producing or selling tobacco, although it is hazardous to health” (Qadhafi, 2005, p25).

The green book for example, considered making profit in any kind of individual economic activity as exploitation. “The legitimate objective of an individual’s economic activity is solely the fulfillment of personal material needs, since the wealth of our world, as well as that of each individual society, is finite at every stage. No individual has the right to undertake an economic activity, whereby wealth exceeding his needs can be amassed.” (Qadhafi, 2005, p40). In fact, Libya prohibited any kind of individual economic activity for decades. Eventually Libya has taken significant steps in terms of privatization in all sectors. These reforms were crucial to make the Libyan economy more competitive in the era of globalization. On the other hand, mass media remains strictly controlled. In fact taking the reforms in the Libyan economy trades and even in the health system could be useful as guides for the reforms of Libyan mass media. This means Libyan media should be reformed equally with other fields, particular economic activities. This would make it more competitive in this era of

globalization where it is very difficult to enforce a firewall policy in the face of flow of information.

Even by the Green Book's standards the media should not be run by the popular committees as these are executive authorities in the Libyan political system; which means logically that the media could not criticise or expose any neglect in the executive authority because it is part of it and run and funded by it. The climate created by such legislation has meant that the Libyan media is free from any opposition to or criticism of government policies. On the other hand there is some equivocating in the Libyan media legislation regards the definition of journalists. The Libyan legislation does not identify clearly which journalists should be affected by other institutions and leagues such as the Libyan Writer's League and the Libyan Journalists Association over the rights of membership and election to these associations. In 2005 there was a controversy over the membership of the Libyan Journalists Association during the election of its chief officer. This led the General People's Congress to interfere in this issue, and since then all media staff and employees are considered to have the right to join the Libyan Journalists Association and to take part in its elections. However, the lack of clarity in the Libyan legislation regarding the definition of journalists remains unsolved.

The Information Monopoly

In Libya the only means which enables any individual to practise his rights in terms of freedom of speech is the popular congresses, where, theoretically, all Libyan people should express their opinions freely and openly. This means that individuals have no rights to establish their own platforms such as mass media to express their opinions. This simply means that mass media should be owned by the state. On the other hand, the Libyan government maintains a tight monopoly on information, and the only official

source of news available is the Libyan Jamahiriya News Agency: JANA. In fact this policy has severely affected the performance of the Libyan media, particularly in the field of news, and news stories are reported in exactly the same way across the entire Libyan media. On the other hand the restrictions and monopoly strangled any possibilities of obtaining different perspectives, which has made the Libyan media unreliable as a source of news.

In fact, Libyan mass media, particularly print media has not developed along side with other domestic sectors, particularly in business. The Libyan economy has achieved significant steps to be more competitive, this development proves that the Libyan government is realistic and the Libyan political system is flexible. On the other hand the Libyan media has preferred to maintain the status quo which has made it outdated in many aspects, and made it less significant for the Libyan people particularly in terms of news.

Censorship

One of the most common obstacles in the Arab region which is widely used in the mass media is the secrecy surrounding the criteria which enable governments to censor material. The main body which is supposed to be responsible for censorship in the Libyan mass media is the Department of Press Monitoring which provides licences to the print media and even censors them during the publishing process. But every form of mass media also has its own system of censorship. For example the news in Libyan television has to be approved by the daily chief editor. According to Elfotaysi (1996), the daily chief editor is authorised to censor all new information planned to be broadcast; viewing all the audio-visual ingredients of a news bulletin; vetting all cultural, economic, political and social news items; organising the order in which the

news is selected for presentation; and viewing the films, still pictures, maps and any illustrated visual materials chosen to be contained in television broadcast bulletins. The chief editor may consult with the Chairman of the Broadcasting Committee to decide what news items - particularly political ones - are to be contained in news bulletins. The chief editor is therefore considered the main gatekeeper in national news programmes (Elfotaysi, 1996, p217). The same could be said about radio news and the print media. No newspaper can publish news unless it comes from JANA. Secondly the chief editor has to approve it. On the other hand, every editor and journalist has to keep an eye on what he/she writes or says, which we may call self censorship.

These measures of censorship create a sinister atmosphere for journalists, hampering any desire for competitiveness and limiting the performance of the Libyan print media particularly in the field of news.

Calls for Reform of the Libyan Media

Many Libyan journalists and experts have called for comprehensive reform of Libyan mass media, and particularly of Libyan media legislation. One of the most significant symposia held in Tripoli on 15-16 August 1994, led to a discussion of Libyan press issues. Libyan media journalists, experts and influential figures in the Libyan mass media participated in this symposium. The main recommendations of this meeting were:

- The necessity to issue a chart of honor which would preserve the traditions and norms of journalism.

- The urgent need for a new law for the Libyan press and renewal of the Libyan law of publication.
- The urgent need for the improvement of the atmosphere in journalism which would guarantee freedom for journalists and their rights.
- The participants realized the absence of criteria for journalism which would be necessary for the improvement of the print media and performance.

The difficulties faced by the Libyan print media in terms of publications and the urgent need to reform the Libyan publications sector was also mentioned in the seminar (Elbarasi, 2000, pp288-289).

In fact the only solid and serious calls for reforms have been those adopted by Saif Al-Islam Al-Qaddafi. Saif Al-Islam leads reform in all fields and he has successfully established a new course in terms of human rights, business and the mass media. He has recently given the mass media a high priority in his plan for reforms.

We could summaries Saif Al-Islam's plans for reforms in terms of the mass media in three main points. Firstly he called for the implementation of the 1972 legislation which he considered as more effective and appropriate. "At a September 2005 meeting with Libyan journalists, for example, Saif Al-Islam harshly criticized the official media. He intimated that all the new laws enacted by the Libyan parliament should be abolished because they greatly restrict the freedom of the press. He called for a return to the legislation of the 1970s, which was more flexible. He made it clear that more openness is anticipated in the regime's dealings with the Libyan media, that it would be possible to publish independent newspapers and that greater authority would be journalists. He announced that he intended to allow private media outlets, not dependent upon the state, as well as other projects that would support freedom of speech" (Dankowitz, 2005). Secondly he called for stability in terms of Libyan management. As mentioned

earlier, instability in the field of Libyan mass media has created major difficulties in its strategy and performance.

Under the patron age of Saif Al-Islam a Libyan company called Al-Gad, which means 'the future' took the lead in 2007 and established a new era of mass media in Libiya. This company now runs a new Libyan terrestrial channel called Al-Libiya and FM radio channel called Al-Libiya. Also two daily newspapers, Oya in Tripoli and Qurena in Benghazi, have begun publication. Although these examples are only a beginning, they have gained high popularity among the Libyan people.

Conclusion

This chapter has explored the characteristics of the Libyan mass media, including the legislation and the main institutions through which the Libyan media operate and are controlled. It also addresses the development of the Libyan media since independence in 1951 up to the present time. This includes the establishment and progress of Libyan news agencies, radio, television and print media. This chapter has also cast light on Libyan efforts to restrict the influence of satellite channels by improving its media performance, and also by the establishment of a company that receives television broadcasts from different channels across the world and re-broadcasts them to conform to Libyan government policy in terms of politics, religion, and culture. The chapter has also dealt with the main problems that have faced the Libyan media technically and financially as well as in terms of legislation and censorship, all of which factors have created major difficulties for the Libyan media and its performance.

It may be argued that there are different degrees of restrictions imposed on the media in both core and peripheral countries. Censorship has taken different forms and has

been exercised to different extents. As discussed in chapters three, four and five, censorship remains the main obstacles which hamper news outlets and weakens the effectiveness of news sources. During the Gulf War in 1991, for example, the American government created the idea of 'pool' where journalists bonded with soldiers in order to cover news from war zones. This left journalists under the watchful eye of the military.

As discussed earlier in chapter two, censorship could also take the form of what Davies (2008) calls 'the electric fence', where publishing news stories could incur legal action against journalists or editors. This policy of tacit censorship is a good example of forms of censorship in core countries, where journalists are prevented from the publication of news stories when the governments in such countries consider this information to be secret or if its publication could be considered damaging to the reputation of the news targets. Censorship is also rife in the Arab region and may come in crude forms. It is usually couched in terms of the national interest which makes the majority of Arab media highly dependent on official news sources, such as national news agencies which monopolize the news coverage. Monopoly and Censorship have also created major difficulties in Libya, where the state-owned news agency is the only source of news authorised to distribute news domestically.

We may argue here that Arab audiences can now receive news from a variety of outlets. However these outlets are not completely free from government interference and censorship. Levels of such censorship and interference may take different forms and levels. In fact in order to grasp some of the traits of such phenomena we may distinguish between these news outlets in terms of ownership. These channels may be divided into four different categories. Firstly some channels are owned and funded by core countries, such as Al-Hura, BBC Arabic and France24. It is essential to mention here that many news outlets such as CNN and the BBC have a limited impact on Arab

audiences due to the language barrier. The influence of these channels broadcast in English or other languages such as French or Spanish is restricted to particular elites who have high levels of education. Therefore the present discussion is confined to those channels which are directed to the majority of Arab audiences. The second category includes independent Arab channels such as Al-Jazeera and Al-Hiwar. The third group are partly state-owned and partly owned by businessmen who have close ties to particular governments. The majority of private Arabic channels could be included in this group. The fourth category is the state-owned channels which include all Arab channels owned by Arab governments. Arab audiences now receive all these channels, which enables them to pick and choose different channels for different programmes. However, the findings of this study reveal that the Arab audiences seem to rely on particular news outlets. The main point here is that Arab audiences watch these channels and take the ownership and the interference of governments into consideration. This could be a reason for the low approval given to particular channels and the popularity of others. The Arab audiences, for example, are aware of the political agenda and interests behind the establishment of the American news outlets in the region such as Al-Hura and radio SAWA. This logically will mean that these news outlets are labelled by Arab audiences as American outlets following American agendas. The same could be said about state-owned channels which usually work as mouthpieces for Arab governments. Semi-state-owned channels are quite successful in terms of news coverage; however the perceived significance of these channels as news sources is constantly under revision among Arab audiences. In fact the Arab region has many hot spots for example concerning the war in Iraq, the Palestine issue and the Darfur crisis, which may play as serious tests of these channels' impartiality and objectivity. On many occasions these channels have faced a difficult situation when their support for the policies of particular governments which sponsor or own them indirectly through the private sector has incurred criticism and hostility. During the Israeli war on Gaza in December 2008, which lasted for three weeks, the Al-

Arabiya channel faced severe criticism and was accused of being pro-American and following an appeasement approach towards Israel in its coverage. “Just days into the conflict, in a linguistic play on the name of Al Arabiya, Hezbollah leader Hassan Nasrallah called the channel “Al Ibryia,” which roughly means The Hebrew One” (Pintak,2009). As discussed in chapter four, it can be difficult to draw a clear line between private channels and state-owned channels. This is mainly due to the lavish subsidies provided by Arab governments to private channels. In fact few channels could be considered as wholly independent. However, such judgments would be a matter of probability and not certainty, due to the absence of microscopic studies regarding ownership and government subsidise to such channels. Al-Jazeera may be considered as an exception and an unprecedented example in the Arab region. It is true that Al-Jazeera is a Qatari enterprise. However, the government of Qatar provides this channel and its journalists with considerable leeway and high threshold of freedom. In fact, Al-Jazeera does not criticise Qatari government policy, but at least does not work as a mouthpiece for Qatari government. Otherwise it would be no different from the rest of the Arab channels and would not have gained such a high profile among Arab audiences as a source of news.

We may conclude here that, despite the censorship and government interference which takes different forms and levels, we may consider satellite channels as part of a healthy atmosphere which has been created by the new satellite technology which has enabled Arab audiences to receive a variety of options. This provides them with a variety of different narratives and points of view regarding news stories. As a result, audiences can make their own judgments and consider different issues from different perspectives.

CHAPTER SIX

THE SURVEY PROCESS & THE SAMPLE

Introduction

The first section in this chapter deals with the process by which the survey was conducted at Al-Fateh University during the summer of 2006. Then the aims and objectives of the survey as well as the selection of the samples and the questionnaire design are discussed.

The following section deals with the process of data collection, and the subsequent section deals with the significance of choosing students for sampling and provides information about the background of the universities and higher education policy in Libya. The final section explains the selection of the sample. This chapter also presents the findings from the questionnaire study concerning the Libyan students' responses relating to their reception of news and their evaluations of news sources. These findings could provide us with an indication of the views of people who would be expected to be interested in watching the news. Students are a significant fraction of any society, and many consider them future leaders and highly educated elites. This chapter explores their main sources of news and the preferred outlets which could be considered as the most reliable sources of news both domestically and internationally. This chapter also deals with the interviews as sources of qualitative data and links them to the findings from the questionnaire survey. Three different types of people were chosen for the interviews: ten Libyan media experts, ten Libyan media producers and ten Libyan citizens from the older generations.

Aims and Objectives of the Survey

The main aim of carrying out the survey was to explore the attitudes of Libyan students towards the Libyan and international mass media, and particularly towards

satellite channels and their significance in the field of news. The survey results are intended to clarify various questions which could be summarised as follows:

- The importance of the major television channels as sources of news for the Libyan people.
- The significance of satellite channels as sources of news.
- Identifying and understanding the reasons behind viewing preferences.
- The significance of local media as a source of news for the Libyan people.
- Libyan people's evaluations of the performance of local news media.

The Process of Data Collection

The Questionnaire

The survey process was based on both questionnaires and interviews. The questionnaire was prepared in English and translated into Arabic. It was first tested on a pilot group of 30 students from different departments in Al-Fateh University. "Piloting of drafts of questionnaires on samples which are representative of the target population is essential both to gauge the length of time which it takes and to investigate whether the questions are properly understood by the respondents" (Sapsford & Jupp, 1996, p102).

The pilot study helped to identify some weaknesses in the questionnaire and led to some revision and development of the questions. Changes in two questions were made in order to make them more clear and avoid any kind of confusion. Question 7 was an open question which aimed to obtain answers about what apparatus was used to receive television channels. Some answers considered YouTube as a means of watching television channels. This led to a change in the question to a multiple choice

form. Also, Question 18 aimed to obtain answers about what type of news was being watched. This question was an open question and some answers given were unclear. For example, some said that they watched “normal news”. This led to changing the question to become a closed question in order to avoid such ambiguity.

Then the questionnaire was distributed to a sample of 158 students from 4 faculties of Al-Fateh University (a copy of the questionnaire can be found in appendix A). De Vaus (1996) argues that “the required sample size depends on two key factors: the degree of accuracy we require for the sample and secondly the extent to which there is variation in the population in regard to the key characteristics of the study” (De Vaus, 1996, p70). According to De Vaus a small sample is accurate “for a population in which most people will answer a question in a particular way or very few answer in a particular way” (De Vaus, 1996, p72).

This point applies to this research, so that a small sample wouldn't affect its accuracy and was sufficient to fulfil the aims of this study.

The choice of the questionnaire as a method of collecting data from students was due to the relatively homogeneous nature of students as a section of the population, and also because students were thought able to deal with the questionnaire more effectively than other social groups.

There are other factors which may lead the researcher to decide what measure should be used. As De Vaus (1996) points out “The decision about the method by which a questionnaire will be administered must take into account the content matter of the survey, the nature of the survey population, the importance of sample quality and size and the amount of time and money available. There is no correct method, only

methods that are more or less appropriate to particular situations. Once the decision about method is made, attention has to be given to motivation of the respondent to participate, ensuring that the information provided is complete and accurate and to ways of successfully completing the administration phase” (De Vaus, 1996, p125).

The Interviews

Thirty interviews were conducted with the following respondents:

- Ten were Libyan media experts, six males and four females, in order to clarify certain aspects of the Libyan and foreign mass media such as their strengths and weaknesses.
- Ten Libyan media producers, six males and four females, working in television, radio and print media, in order to ascertain the difficulties facing the Libyan media and possible solutions to make the Libyan media more competitive and reliable.
- Ten older people, seven males and three females, in order to trace the evolution of media availability and draw comparisons between the past and present in the field of news.

Interviews are qualitative tools which are highly significant in the social sciences as a method of collecting data. “Compared to other research procedures in the social sciences, qualitative interviews are particularly closely related to the approaches of interpretative sociology. Because of the possibility of enquiring openly about situational meaning or motives for action, or collecting everyday theories and self-interpretations in a differentiated and open way, and also because of the possibility of discursive understanding through interpretation, open or semi-standardized interviews provide important opportunities for an empirical application of action-theory ideas in sociology and psychology” (Flick, Kardorff & Steinke, 2004, p203).

Interviews were chosen because these are means of identifying key issues and casting light on particular factors where relevant information is difficult to obtain solely by questionnaire (transcripts of the interviews can be found in appendices B1, B2, and B3).

In order to give the interviewees more space and freedom in their answers, the questions asked in the interviews were open-ended. These “do not constrain the respondent’s beliefs or opinions to predetermined categories as fully standardized methods of data collection must do. Although it is not so apparent with interview schedules as it is in self-administered questionnaires, the respondent can also see that his or her reply is being taken down fully rather than summarily reduced to a tick in a box, and the sense that their responses are not constrained can help to improve the naturalism of his method” (Sapsford & Jupp, 1996, pp101-102).

Open-ended questions, in particular, create the ideal atmosphere for interviewees to express themselves without any restrictions. Also, using the interview as a method of collecting data from older people was probably more effective than a questionnaire would have been, particularly in light of the high rate of illiteracy among this group in Libya.

The questions asked in the interviews aimed to examine the Libyan media’s weaknesses and strengths, and whether Libyan television and other Libyan mass media could compete with the international media, particularly in news channels. Also interviewees were asked whether the emergence of satellite channels was considered a positive or negative phenomenon and also what measures should be taken to make the Libyan media more effective. It was necessary to obtain permission from each faculty to carry out the questionnaire survey. Letters were set from the School of Media and Arts at the University of Al-Fateh (see appendix K1 & K2) to each faculty,

and then suitable times were arranged for conducting the questionnaire. Translations of the questionnaires can be found in Appendix F2.

The Combination of Qualitative and Quantitative Methods

The study used a combination of qualitative and quantitative methods. Questionnaires were the quantitative method and the interviews provided a qualitative data. The combination of qualitative and quantitative methods in social research is a highly controversial issue. Some consider that the two methods entail completely different philosophies and cannot be combined. The argument which suggests that the two methods are different is based on two main issues concerning epistemological and technical considerations. "There has been a strong suggestion that epistemological issues underpin the divide between them. By an 'epistemological issue' is meant a matter which has to do with the question of what is to pass as warrantable, and hence acceptable, knowledge' (Bryman, 1988, p104).

Some consider that qualitative and quantitative research traditions reflect different epistemological positions, as Filstead (1979; cited in Bryman, 1988) pointed out: "Quantitative and qualitative methods are more than just differences between research strategies and data collection procedures. These approaches represent fundamentally different epistemological frameworks for conceptualizing the nature of knowing, social reality, and procedures for comprehending these phenomena" (Bryman, 1988, p105). Other issues regarding technical considerations are factors such as time and cost which may lead the researcher to prefer a particular method.

The practical problems create some lack of enthusiasm among researchers who find the combination of the two methods difficult even though they acknowledge that they

can be combined. Bogdan, and Biklen, (1982; cited in Bryman, 1988) pointed out that “research which combines the two approaches is likely to produce a big headache” (Bryman, 1988, p108). In fact a combination of quantitative and qualitative research methods can be used in order to provide broadly consistent results. Web et al. (1966) suggested that social scientists are likely to exhibit greater confidence in their findings when these are derived from more than one method of investigation. Their focus was largely on the need, as they perceived it, for more than one research instrument to be used in the measurement of the main variables in a study, a strategy which was referred to as the ‘triangulation of measurement’. While this emphasis would seem to relate to the quantitative research tradition, many writers have stretched its potential meaning to embrace a wide range of concerns. For example, Denzin (1970, cited in Bryman, 1988) treats triangulation as an approach in which “multiple observers, theoretical perspectives, sources of data, and methodologies” are combined. By and large, researchers have viewed the main message of the idea of triangulation as entailing a need to employ more than one method of investigation and hence more than one type of data. Within this context quantitative and qualitative research may be perceived as different ways of examining the same research problem. By combining the two, the researcher’s claims for the validity of his or her conclusions are enhanced if they can be shown to provide mutual confirmation (Bryman, 1992, p131).

As a result of the evaluation of different arguments regarding the combination of the two methods, the present researcher decided to combine both qualitative and quantitative methods in this study, as this method is more effective in strengthening the arguments and analysis. In their justification for linking qualitative and quantitative data Rossman and Wilson (1985) highlighted three main reasons for the combination of these two methods:

“(a) To enable confirmation or corroboration of each other via triangulation; (b) to elaborate or develop analysis, providing richer detail; and (c) to initiate new lines of thinking through attention to surprises or paradoxes, ‘turning ideas around,’ providing fresh insight” (Rossman & Wilson, 1985, pp634-637).

Difficulties Encountered in Data Collection:

The survey was conducted two weeks before final examinations, which was a difficult time for students. This led the researcher to rule out of the sample final year students in each school in order to avoid hasty answers from them.

A majority of interviewees refused to be tape recorded due to the sensitivity of the subject. The media are considered by most Libyan people as a politically taboo subject where it is sometimes inappropriate to make critical remarks. The alternative method used to record the findings of the interviews was by note-taking method. In fact,

“taking notes in an interview may have several effects. Intense note-taking may distract the interviewer from his task of observing and listening to the respondent. Also, the respondent may feel the interviewer should not neglect him and should show more spontaneous appreciation. When few notes are taken, the respondent may feel that, when the interviewer is writing, something important has been said. In hostile territory, it is usually better to leave note-taking until after the interview if the session is short and the details are few. The interviewees can often detect the respondent’s tendency to elaborate at those points where the interviewer is taking notes, to

go back and qualify or “correct” those points, or to quickly pass on to a new topic” (Gorden,1969, p175).

In order to avoid any disturbance to the interviewees and to allow them to answer more freely, a basic strategy was used to clarify vague or unclear points. This was to underline any point or phrase which needed to be clarified and to return to them after the interviews ended. This method allowed the researcher to obtain further information and also clarify those points which were ambiguous or unclear.

The main difficulties that occurred during the interviewing sessions were receiving vague answers or the use of dialect phrases. As a result the researcher decided to use probe notes in order to clarify and elaborate on these issues. Probe notes are points which are usually taken by the researcher to remind him/her of specific issues which should be elaborated or clarified later in the interview (Gorden, 1969, p175). The researcher also encountered quite a challenging task as taking notes requires speedy writing and good skills as the researcher had to do this throughout the recording of interviews.

It is extremely difficult to guarantee truthful responses so the researcher has to follow a research ethics procedure which may provide the best chance that people will be truthful in their responses. This includes ensuring people that the information gained will remain confidential and only used for academic purposes. This was clearly explained to each member of the sample. Also the researcher reassured people that their identity wouldn't be revealed and no information about their attitudes or responses will be provided to any third party under any circumstances. The researcher also agreed not to use a tape recording with interviewees who clearly refused to accept this method as a method of recording their responses. This gave those surveyed a comfortable atmosphere to express their opinion freely without any

concerns. Finally the researcher avoided any direct questions which may be considered by the responders as sensitive or that may incur discomfort, such as a political issue. These measures are in fact the main principle of research ethics and play a crucial role in order to achieve a high level of truthful responses. As Oliver (2003) argues "Research should avoid causing harm, distress, anxiety, pain or any other negative feeling to participants. Participants should be fully informed about all relevant aspects of research, before they agree to take part... The scope of the confidentiality of the data provided, and of the anonymity of the respondents, particularly in final research report, should be clarified with the participants" (Oliver, 2003, p15).

The Significance of Libyan Students for Sampling

There are many reasons for choosing students for sampling. Firstly, students usually come from different cities and backgrounds, providing any researcher with an ideal opportunity to examine cultural, political or social phenomena. The questionnaire data, therefore, provide a clear picture of the views of young, educated people from range of towns and cities. Secondly, students are considered to be the future of their society and the future decision makers. Thirdly, students are usually among the most educated, particularly in political matters, enabling them to follow and understand global events.

Libya gives education a high priority, particularly for higher-level studies. The number of universities in Libya has increased from just one in 1970 to more than twenty-seven in 2003. However, the Libyan government has decided to merge some of these universities in order to reduce costs and concentrate on quality rather than quantity. The number of universities now is 12. The number of students has also increased from 13,417 during 1970 to 254,456 in 2005. Libya has both state and private universities

and higher education institutions. There are 56 private universities and 255 higher education colleges. Private universities are still a controversial issue as a majority of them do not meet the criteria set for university standards. State universities remain the main institutions of higher education in Libya.

The state owned universities in Libya are as follows:

- Garyyounis
- Omar Al Moktar
- Al-Tahadi
- Seventh of October
- Al-Asmarya
- Al-Fateh
- The Open University
- Al-Mergeb
- Sbha
- Seventh of April
- Al-Jabel Al Garbi
- Nasser

The researcher chose Al-Fateh University as a case study. Al-Fateh University is one of the most prestigious universities in Libya. Based in Tripoli, it was established in 1957, and now has 37,827 students in different faculties.

Table 2. Number of students in the faculties of Al-Fateh University, 2005/2006

Faculty	Number of students
Medicine	5462
Engineering	4217
Science	4235
Social Sciences	3217
Economics	5532
Media & Arts	2242
Dental Science	4437
Agriculture	4835
Law	2844
Sports Studies	834
Total	37827

Selection of the samples:

Case studies of one class from the second year and one class from the third year in each of four schools. The classes chosen were the first class within each school to appear on the faculty administration list. The sampling method chosen was non-random sampling, which can be used when the sample or the groups chosen bear similarities with the larger group. We may argue here that the findings of this study could be considered as indicative, and could be generalized. Dixon's (1987) argument is relevant here that "some researchers believe that they can, using their own judgment or intuition, select the best people or groups to be studied. The typical rural school is selected and studied, and the results generalized to rural schools. The typical English class is compared with the typical history class. How are these known to be typical? Unless objective criteria are set out beforehand, and each group shown to

meet these criteria, there is the only practical way to draw a sample. If a purposive sample is studied only tentatively suggested generalizing may be made” (Dixon, 1987, pp139-140).

Dixon concluded that his comparison of three rural and three urban schools revealed some differences, and he argued that “while it is not strictly possible to generalize from this sample to all rural and urban schools we think it is likely that these differences will be found in other instances” (Dixon, 1987, pp139-140). Similarly, in this study, it could not be certain that the sample was representative, but it is likely that similar trends would be found in other instances.

The sample chosen included 158 male and female students, divided between the following schools:

- School of Arts and Social Sciences, 39 respondents as follows:
 - English Studies, 14 students
 - Arabic Studies, 12 students
 - Social Sciences, 13 students
- School of Economics & Politics, 40 respondents
- School of Law, 40 respondents
- School of Medicine, 39 respondents

The reason for choosing respondents studying the humanities was to enable the researcher to cover a variety of subject areas. On the other hand, choosing practice-based students in medical studies was thought more likely to reflect the views of ordinary people, as their studies do not necessarily lead them to engage with political issues or current affairs. The data was analyzed using the SPSS software program, which is deemed highly effective in analyzing this kind of data.

The Questionnaire Findings

Gender of Respondents

Table 3 shows the gender distribution of the sample. Females represented 60.1% of respondents with 39.9% males. In fact the numbers of female students in a majority of Libyan universities has usually been higher than males in recent years, due to encouragement from both their families and the government.

Table 3. Gender of Respondents

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Male	63	39.9%
Female	95	60.1%
Total	158	100.0%

Age

Table 4 illustrates the distribution of the sample according to age. 55.7% of the respondents were aged between 22-25 years, 36.1% were aged between 18 to 21, and 8.2% were over 26 years old.

Table 4. Age of the respondents

Age	Frequency	Percentage
21-18	57	36.1%
22-25	88	55.7%
Over 26	13	8.2%
Total	158	100.0%

Marital Status

98.1% of respondents were not married and only 1.9% were married. Due to the high cost of living in the major cities, students in particular usually prefer to get married after graduation, which may explain the rarity of married students.

Table 5. Marital status of respondents

Marriage status	Frequency	Percentage
Not married	155	98.1%
Married	3	1.9%
Total	158	100.0%

Languages spoken

As can be seen in table 6 below, a majority of students (71.5%) said that they spoke English, whereas 6.3% each said they spoke Italian and French. English is the second language in Libya and has become an important subject in the education curriculum, particularly in higher education. Italian remains widely understood and many Italian phrases have become integrated into Libyan dialects. French is very limited, even among highly educated people.

Table 6. Languages spoken

Language	Frequency	Percentage
English	113	71.5%
French	10	6.3%
Italian	10	6.3%
Spanish	0	0.0%
German	2	1.3%
Others	23	14.6%
Total	158	100.0%

Television Set Ownership

The data in Table 7 reveals that 37.3% of respondents had two television sets, 31.6% owned three, whereas only a small percentage (1.3%) did not own a television. This reflects the relatively high standard of living in a nation with a low population but which is rich in oil.

Table 7. Television sets owned

Number of televisions	Frequency	Percentage
None	2	1.3%
One set	25	15.8%
Two sets	59	37.3%
Three sets	50	31.6%
Over three	22	13.9%
Total	158	100.0%

Watching Satellite Channels

Most of the sample (49.9%) watched satellite channels. In fact the easy availability of satellite channels and the low cost of dishes enable a majority of Libyan people to have them.

Table 8. Watching satellite channels

Watch satellite channels	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	150	94.9%
No	8	5.1%
Total	158	100.0%

Means of Reception of Satellite Channels

Most of the sample (86.9%) received satellite channels using dishes, whereas only 7.6% relied on the Libyan company which re-broadcasts channels free. Only 3.8% received satellite channels using aerials and even fewer watched satellite channels communally with their neighbours. Receiving satellite channels either by relying on re-broadcasting or neighbours was quite common when the dishes were expensive, but nowadays only a very small percentage of people rely on either of these methods to receive satellite channels.

Table 9. Means of receiving satellite channels

Means	Frequency	Percentage
Satellite	137	86.9%
Re-broadcast	12	7.6%
Aerial	6	3.8%
Neighbours	1	0.6%
Others	2	1.3%
Total	158	100.0%

Time Spent Watching

Table 10 shows that over half of the sample (53%) watched satellite channels for between 2-4 hours per day. 33% watched for less than one hour per day, and 5% spent more than eight hours per day watching satellite channels. This is due to the nature of the sample which consisted of a highly educated cross section of people.

They would be more likely to be more open and enthusiastic about updating their knowledge and awareness concerning current affairs.

On the other hand their time spent watching television would usually be in the afternoon after they had come back from their universities and had time for relaxation.

Table 10. Time spent watching satellite channels

Time spent	Frequency	Percentage
Less than one hour per day	52	32.9%
2-4 hours	83	52.5%
6-8 hours	15	9.5%
Over 8 hours	8	5.1%
Total	158	100.0%

Watching the News

A high percentage of 83.5% watched the news, whereas 16.4% did not. These percentages may illustrate the significance of the news, particularly for more educated people in enabling them to extend their knowledge and awareness of the world.

Table 11. Watching news

Watch News	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	132	83.5%
No	26	16.4%
Total	158	100.0%

Preferred Channels

This section provides a considerable amount of data concerning the main television channels proffered to the Libyan people as a source of news. This answers one of the main research questions which are to identify the main sources of news which the Libyan people rely on.

First Choice Channel of the Sample

Table 12 shows that Al-Jazeera was chosen by 55.1% of the sample as first choice of television channel. This demonstrates that Al-Jazeera is a significant news outlet for Libyan audiences. Also, Al-Arabiya gained a considerable percentage among the sample whereas CNN gained less approval. This demonstrates that both Al-Jazeera and its main rival Al-Arabiya are successful and competitive channels in the Arab region. Libyan television was less competitive and was chosen by only 9.5% of the sample.

Table 12. First choice channel of the sample

Channel	Frequency	Percentage
No answer	18	11.4%
Al-Jazeera	87	55.1%
Al-Arabiya	18	11.4%
MBC	15	9.5%
Libya	15	9.5%
Al-Hura	2	1.26%
CNN	3	1.9%
Total	158	100.0%

First Choice of Channel by Gender

Table 13 shows that Al-Jazeera was chosen by high percentages of both genders (60% among males and 51.6% among females). This illustrates that Al-Jazeera has succeeded in attracting both genders in almost equal measures. Women showed a tendency to watch Al-Arabiya and MBC more than men. Al-Arabiya is pro-Saudi and less aggressive towards American policy in the region. Al-Arabiya is also more calm in dealing with complex political issues in the region such as the Palestine issue. These characters may make the channel more favoured by women than men.

Also females tended to watch MBC more than males. This probably due to the nature of its programming, as it broadcasts more entertainment and fashion programmes. On the other hand Libyan television was favoured by males rather than females. 12.3% of males chose Libyan television as their first choice compared to only 7.5% of females. Domestic news and coverage of government activities are probably the main reasons behind the tendency of men to watch more Libyan television. CNN and Al-Hura gained low percentages among both genders. Al-Hura in particular was established during the Iraq War in order to promote American policy in the region. This makes the channel less significant and more suspicious to Libyans as a source of news in the Arab region.

Table 13. First choice of channel by gender

Channels		Gender of respondent		
		male	female	Total
No answer	N	7	11	18
	% within gender	10.8%	11.8%	11.4%
Al-Jazeera	N	39	48	87
	% within gender	60.0%	51.6%	55.1%
Al-Arabiya	N	6	12	18
	% within gender	9.2%	12.9%	11.4%
MBC	N	2	13	15
	% within gender	3.1%	14.0%	9.5%
Libya	N	8	7	15
	% within gender	12.3%	7.5%	9.5%
Al-Hura	N	1	1	2
	% within gender	1.53%	1.07%	1.26%
CNN	N	2	1	3
	% within gender	3.1%	1.1%	1.9%
Total	N	65	93	158
	% within sex of respondent	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Issues in the News Discussed by the Sample

In their answers about what issues they had discussed recently there were noticeable differences between the two genders.

Males

Table 14a reveals that over a quarter of the sample (28%) did not give answers, whereas 22% said that the World Cup was their main issue of discussion, whereas various political issues were mentioned. 19% said the death of Zarqawi was a main issue of discussion, and the war on Iraq and the Palestine issue were important for 11% each. The Saddam Hussein trial was discussed by just 6% of the sample. Political issues were a high priority for the sample, particularly those concerning the Arab region.

Table 14. - Issues discussed by male respondents

News issue	Frequency	Percentage
Football World Cup	14	21.8%
No answer	18	28.1%
Zarqawi's death	12	18.7%
Iraq war	7	10.9%
Palestine issue	7	10.9%
Saddam Hussein trial	4	6.2%
Darfur issue	1	1.6%
Iran nuclear issue	1	1.6%
Total	64	100.0%

Females

Table 14b shows that 30% did not answer the question, and 23% said they discussed the death of Zaqawi. 14% said that the Iraq war was their main issue of discussion, and also the World Cup was mentioned by 14% and the Palestine issue by 5%, whereas Saddam's trial was cited by only 3% of the sample. This shows that there were similarities in the subjects discussed by both males and females. This was probably due to the similarities in their level of education as university students.

Also we can see some differences between the priorities of men and women. For example news of the World Cup was more significant to males, who did not mention news of celebrities as did some of the females. As can be seen in the tables men and women showed similar levels of interest in political news stories. On the other hand, there were some differences in terms of the type of news preferred by each gender; men were more interested in the World Cup and women in celebrity news.

Table 15. Issues discussed by female respondents

News issue	Frequency	Percentage
No answer	29	30.86%
Zarqawi's death	23	24.46%
Iraq war	14	14.89%
World Cup	14	14.89%
Palestine issue	5	5.31%
Saddam Hussein trial	3	3.19%
The Egyptian actor affair (Tamer Hosni)	2	2.12%
Terrorism	2	2.12%
Darfur	1	1.06%
Hoda Sultan's death(An Egyptian actor)	1	1.06%
Total	94	100.0%

The Most Reliable Satellite Channel for Iraq War News Coverage

Table 15 shows that 51.9% of the sample considered Al-Jazeera as the most reliable source of Iraq war coverage. 20% did not give any answer and 18.4% considered Al-Arabiya as the most reliable channel in this subject whereas only 4% of the sample considered Al-hura as the most reliable channel, 3% the Libyan satellite channel and 2.3% MBC.

Al-Jazeera obviously succeeded in attracting a high percentage of the sample for its coverage of the Iraq war. The channel was free from any government influence, provided news stories from Iraq's streets and interviewed ordinary Iraqi people as well as officials and experts. This gave the channel a high profile among all Arab audiences. Al-Arabiya is one of the main competitors of Al-Jazeera but gained lower approval. This may be due to its support of Saudi and American policy, which is not popular in the Arab region. The same could be said about Al-Hura, which is American-owned. The Libyan channel gained a very low percentage probably due to its poor news coverage generally in comparison with other channels such as Al-Jazeera and Al-Arabiya.

Table 16. Most reliable source of Iraq war coverage

Channel	Frequency	Percentage
No answer	32	20.3%
Al-Jazeera	82	51.9%
Al-Arabiya	29	18.4%
MBC	4	2.5%
Al-Hura	6	3.8%
Libya	5	3.2%
Total	158	100.0%

Frequency of Watching News

Table 16 shows that 50% of the sample said that they watched the news more or less depending on events. 15% watched the news regularly and 28% watched the news quite often. Only 4% never watched the news. In fact watching the news is quite significant to the sample, particularly during ongoing situations such as the Iraq war and the Palestine issue. Women were much less likely to say that they watched the news regularly and much more likely to say that it depended on events.

Table 17. Frequency of Watching News by gender

Frequency of watching news	Gender		Total
	Male	Female	
Regularly N	19	5	24
% within gender	30.2%	5.3%	15.2%
Quite often N	19	25	44
% within gender	30.2%	26.3%	27.8%
depends On events N	20	58	78
% within gender	31.7%	61.1%	49.4%
Rarely N	4	2	6
% within gender	6.3%	2.1%	3.8%
Never N	1	5	6
% within gender	1.6%	5.3%	3.8%
Total N	63	95	158
% within gender	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Time Preferred for Watching News

Table 17 reveals that 36% of the sample watched the news at no particular time. 23% preferred watching news at midday, 20% in the afternoon and 19% in the evening whereas only 1.3% watched the news in the morning. This could be due to the nature of the sample, as students are usually busy studying in the morning to midday, and the

afternoon would be the ideal time for them to watch the news. Women were more likely to say that there was no particular time at which they preferred watching news.

Table 18. Time preferred for watching the news by gender

Time preferred		Gender		Total
		Male	Female	
Morning	N	0	2	2
% within gender		.0%	2.1%	1.3%
Midday	N	25	12	37
% within gender		39.7%	12.6%	23.4%
Afternoon	N	12	20	32
% within gender		19.0%	21.1%	20.3%
Evening	N	16	14	30
% within gender		25.4%	14.7%	19.0%
No particular time	N	10	47	57
% within gender		15.9%	49.5%	36.1%
Total	N	63	95	158
% within gender		100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Language Preferred in Watching News

Table 18 below shows that 73% of the sample preferred watching the news in Arabic and 20% in English, whereas only 4% preferred to watch news in French and 3% in Italian. The high percentage favouring Arabic is understandable as this is the country's first language. Secondly, in Libyan society people have close relationships with each other and usually prefer to watch television collectively. This means that they choose options which could be understood by all of the family or friends present.

Watching news in English reflects the nature of the sample and the benefits of higher education which would enable respondents to understand information in English.

French and Italian both gained low percentages even among these highly educated people, which could be interpreted as due to the nature of the higher education system in Libya which gives priority to English.

Table 19. Language preferred in watching news

Language	Frequency	Percentage
Arabic	115	72.8%
English	31	19.6%
French	6	3.8%
Italian	5	3.2%
Others	1	0.6%
Total	158	100.0%

Place Preferred to Watch the News

94% preferred to watch the news at home and only 2.5% each preferred to watch it at the workplace or in no particular place. Only 1.3% watched the news in cafés.

The sample of university students would be busy all day at university, and so home would be the ideal place for them to relax and watch television. Secondly, Libyan society is quite conservative, and women are expected to be at home, particularly at night. Again this makes home the ideal place for watching the news. Men were slightly more likely to watch news outside of home, but still a large majority preferred to watch at home.

Table 20. Places preferred for watching news by gender

Place	Gender		Total
	Male	Female	
Home N % within gender	57 90.5%	91 95.8%	148 93.7%
Café N % within gender	2 3.2%	0 0%	2 1.3%
At work N % within gender	3 4.8%	1 1.1%	4 2.5%
Others N % within gender	1 1.6%	3 3.2%	4 2.5%
Total N % within gender	63 100.0%	95 100.0%	158 100.0%

Social Context of Watching the News

A high percentage, 59% of respondents, preferred to watch the news with their families, and 32% preferred to watch it alone, 4% with friends and only 2% with their colleagues at work. This illustrates the nature of Libyan society, where the family is important and news in particular is highly preferred when watching the television collectively, since it is usually free from any embarrassing or awkward scenes. On the other hand the Libyan people have a good standard of living which enables them to have more than one television set in their homes and this gives the opportunity to watch the news alone. Watching with family is also linked to the tendency to watch news at home.

Table 21. Social context of watching the news by gender

Context of watching	Gender		Total
	Male	Female	
Alone N % within gender	26 41.3%	24 25.3%	50 31.6%
With family N % within gender	30 47.6%	64 67.4%	94 59.5%
With friends N % within gender	3 4.8%	3 3.2%	6 3.8%
With colleagues N % within gender	3 4.8%	0 0%	3 1.9%
Others N % within gender	1 1.6%	4 4.2%	5 3.2%
Total N % within gender	63 100.0%	95 100.0%	158 100.0%

Type of News Preferred

Table 22 shows that 30% of respondents preferred political news and 22% preferred sports. 21.5% preferred cultural news, 8% scientific news and only 6.3% each

preferred business and arts news. This variation may be due to the nature of the sample of highly educated people who are more likely to watch and have access to different news outlets in order to update and widen their knowledge and awareness about the world, particularly concerning political issues. There were some differences between the genders in this aspect. Men tended to watch political news whereas women were interested in cultural news and also there were high levels of female interest in arts and fashion news which gained low percentages among men.

Table 22. Type of news preferred by gender

Type of news	Gender		Total
	Male	Female	
Politics N % within gender	25 39.7%	23 24.2%	48 30.4%
Culture N % within gender	10 15.9%	24 25.3%	34 21.5%
Sports N % within gender	16 25.4%	19 20.0%	35 22.2%
Economics N % within gender	4 6.3%	6 6.3%	10 6.3%
Science N % within gender	5 7.9%	8 8.4%	13 8.2%
Arts N % within gender	2 3.2%	8 8.4%	10 6.3%
Fashion N % within gender	0 .0%	6 6.3%	6 3.8%
Others N % within gender	1 1.6%	1 1.1%	2 1.3%
Total N % within gender	63 100.0%	95 100.0%	158 100.0%

Type of News and Preferred Channels

Table 23 shows the relationship between the type of news preferred and the respondent's most favoured satellite television channels.

As can be seen from the table, politics was usually the favoured form of news irrespective of which channel was preferred. The small number who preferred MBC were equally likely to favour other forms of news, particularly culture and sports.

Political news was the main type of news preferred by those who watched Libyan television and CNN, even though these channels gained lower levels of approval as sources of news in comparison with Al-Jazeera, Al-Arabiya and MBC. Political and cultural news were the main types preferred when people watched Libyan television. The other types of news gained lower percentages.

Table 23. first choice of preferred news by favoured channel preferred of watching news

Type of news preferred	Most favoured satellite television channel chosen									
	No answer	Al-Jazeera	Al-Arabiya	MBC	Libya	Al-Hura	CNN	Total		
No answer	N % within favoured channel	1 5.6%	0 .0%	0 .0%	0 .0%	0 .0%	0 .0%	1 0.6%		
Politics	N % within favoured channel	9 50.0%	63 72.4%	13 72.2%	7 50.0%	13 86.7%	2 66.6%	3 100.0%	109 69.4%	
Cultural	N % within favoured channel	2 11.1%	12 13.8%	2 11.1%	4 28.6%	1 6.7%	0 .0%	0 .0%	21 13.4%	
Sports	N % within favoured channel	3 16.7%	8 9.2%	1 5.6%	2 14.3%	1 6.7%	0 .0%	0 .0%	15 9.6%	
Economics	N % within favoured channel	0 .0%	0 .0%	0 .0%	1 7.1%	0 .0%	0 .0%	0 .0%	1 0.6%	
Sciences	N % within favoured channel	2 11.1%	3 3.4%	1 5.6%	0 .0%	0 .0%	0 .0%	0 .0%	6 3.8%	
Arts	N % within favoured channel	1 5.6%	0 .0%	1 5.6%	0 .0%	0 .0%	1 33.3%	0 .0%	3 1.9%	
Fashions	N % within favoured channel	0 .0%	1 1.1%	0 .0%	0 .0%	0 .0%	0 .0%	0 .0%	1 0.6%	
Total	N % within favoured channel	18 100.0%	87 100.0%	18 100.0%	14 100.0%	15 100.0%	3 100.0%	3 100.0%	157 100.0%	

Discussion of the News

Table 24 shows that around half of the sample (49%) discussed news depending on current events, 22% sometimes and 13% always discussed the news. 10% rarely did, and only 7% never discussed the news at all. Generally it appears that a high percentage preferred to discuss the news, which could be due to the nature of the sample as they are more aware about the world and are more likely to discuss events in order to clarify their significance as well as to analyze news stories. Women were more likely to say that it depended on events.

Table 24. Discussion of the news by gender

Frequency of discussion of news	Gender		Total
	Male	Female	
Frequently N % within gender	9 14.3%	11 11.6%	20 12.7%
Sometimes N % within gender	21 33.3%	14 14.7%	35 22.2%
Depending on events N % within gender	21 33.3%	56 58.9%	77 48.7%
Rarely N % within gender	3 4.8%	12 12.6%	15 9.5%
Never N % within gender	9 14.3%	2 2.1%	11 7.0%
Total N % within gender	63 100.0%	95 100.0%	158 100.0%

Choice of Discussants

Table 25 reveals that 51% of the sample preferred to discuss the news with friends and 41% with their families, while 6% preferred colleagues. Friends usually have much in common, but on the other hand discussing political issues is not easy in Libya.

People tend to reveal their opinions freely with close friends or relatives, which may explain this distribution of percentages. We also may argue that the reason behind this high percentage was due to the nature of Libyan society. People have close relationships and often watch television together.

News is usually predictable and its context is known in advance through the headlines. This reason in particular brands the news as a safe item, and makes it more attractive to watch particularly during family gatherings. Furthermore, we may argue that the majority of the Arab televisions channels are aware of cultural rules and norms in Arab societies. This makes their news coverage free from any stories which may cause embarrassment to the audience, such as sex scandals or other stories which are usually considered forbidden or unacceptable.

Table 25. People discuss the news with by gender

People who the news is discussed with	Gender		Total
	Male	Female	
Friends N % within gender	35 55.6%	46 48.4%	81 51.3%
Colleagues N % within gender	8 12.7%	2 2.1%	10 6.3%
Family N % within gender	19 30.2%	45 47.4%	64 40.5%
Others N % within gender	1 1.6%	2 2.1%	3 1.9%
Total N % within gender	63 100.0%	95 100.0%	158 100.0%

Trustworthiness of News Sources

Table 26 shows that 85% of respondents thought that some news sources were reliable and some were not. 8% said that all news sources were unreliable and 7%

said all were reliable. This could illustrate the nature of the sample and the ability of respondents to judge news sources and draw comparisons between different outlets.

Table 26. Reliability of news sources

Reliability of news sources	Frequency	Percentage
Some are more reliable	134	84.8%
They are all reliable	11	7.0%
They are all unreliable	13	8.2%
Total	158	100.0%

Means of Receiving Local News

As can be seen in table 27, around half (46%) of the sample got their local news on the television, 20% by radio and only 9.5% relied on newspapers. 13% relied on friends and 10% family. Only 1% got local news from their colleagues. This illustrates that the Libyan mass media is significant as a source of local news, but on the other hand the high reliance on personal contacts (either friends or relatives) as a source of local news means that there is a gap in local news coverage which led a considerable percentage of the sample relying on these sources. Also we should remember that the Libyan mass media monopolize local news coverage, which means that it is the only media option available in terms of local news coverage.

Table 27. Means of receiving local news by gender

Means		Gender		Total
		Male	Female	
Television	N	33	40	73
% within gender		52.4%	42.1%	46.2%
Radio	N	15	16	31
% within gender		23.8%	16.8%	19.6%
Newspapers & Magazines	N	6	9	51
% within gender		9.5%	9.5%	9.5%
Friends	N	5	15	20
% within gender		7.9%	15.8%	12.7%
Colleagues	N	1	1	2
% within gender		1.6%	1.1%	1.3%
Family	N	2	14	16
% within gender		3.2%	14.7%	10.1%
Others	N	1	0	1
% within gender		1.6%	.0%	.6%
Total	N	63	95	158
% within gender		100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Time Spent Watching Libyan Television

Table 28 shows that 64.6% of respondents watched Libyan television for less than one hour per day. 32.3% spent between two to four hours per day and only very few spent either between 6-8 hours per day (2.5%) and more than 8 hours(0.6%) watching Libyan television. In fact the nature of the sample may have caused this distribution, as students generally have less time to watch television.

Table 28. Time spent watching Libyan television by gender

Time Spent		Gender		Total
		Male	Female	
Less than one hour	N	34	68	102
% within gender		54.0%	71.6%	64.6%
From 2 – 4	N	25	26	51
hours per day		39.7%	27.4%	32.3%
% within gender				
6-8 hours	N	3	1	4
% within gender		4.8%	1.1%	2.5%
Over 8 hours	N	1	0	1
% within gender		1.6%	.0%	.6%
Total	N	63	95	158
% within gender		100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Type of News Preferred and Time Spent Watching Libyan Television

Table 29 shows the relationship between the type of news preferred and time spent watching Libyan television.

As can be seen in the table, 7 out of 109 people (6.42%) who preferred political news gave no answer when asked how much Libyan television they watched each day,(55.96%) of such people spent less than one hour, and 34.86% between one hour to two hours, whereas just 1.83% spent between 2- 4 hours watching Libyan television. This illustrates that the majority of Libyan people who watched Libyan television sought political news and they spent up to two hours per day watching Libyan television. The table also shows that people who preferred economics and science news tended to watch more television per day, while people who preferred sports tended to watch less. 62.96% of sports fans spent less than one hour per day watching Libyan television.

In general, the time spent watching Libyan television was in fact quite limited, as the majority watched it for less than two hours per day.

The findings show two main trends. The first is that people tended to watch Libyan television for a limited amount of time per day in comparison with other satellite television channels. Secondly, the types of news watched on Libyan television were mainly restricted to political and cultural news.

Both of these trends indicate the weakness of the performance of Libyan television which the study has aimed to identify.

This issue in particular is discussed later in this chapter, and it was considered more appropriate to deal with these issues in great detail in discussions with Libyan media experts, as they are more capable of analysing the reasons behind this low profile of Libyan television performance, particularly in terms of the news.

Table 29. Preferred type of news by amount of time per day spent watching news on Libyan television

Type of news preferred	No answer	Less than one hours	1-2 hours	2-4 hours	6-8 hours	Total
Politics N %within time spent	7 6.42%	61 55.96%	38 34.86%	2 1.83%	1 0.91%	109
Cultural N %within time spent	5 9.6%	28 53.84%	17 32.69%	1 1.92%	1 1.92%	52
Sports N %within time spent	1 3.70%	17 62.96%	8 29.62%	1 3.70%	0 .0%	27
Economics N %within time spent	1 8.33%	4 33.33%	6 50%	1 8.33%	0 .0%	12
Sciences N %within time spent	1 8.33%	4 33.33%	6 50%	1 8.33%	0 .0%	12
Arts N %within time spent	1 12.5%	3 37.5%	3 37.5%	1 12.5%	0 .0%	8
Fashion N %within time spent	1 14.28%	2 28.57%	3 42.85%	1 14.28%	0 .0%	7

Relationship Between the Preference for Political News and Discussion of the News

Table 30 deals with the discussion of the news by people who chose politics as one of their preferred form of news, showing that a majority of such people 48.6% discuss political news depending on events, whereas 22.9% only occasionally enter discussion. This could be understandable as some news stories deserve to be discussed more because of their complexity or in order to deepen an individual's knowledge. People may tend to discuss news in order to stimulate their arguments or expand their knowledge about these news stories.

Table 30. Frequency of the discussion of the news
by those who prefer political news

Frequency of discussion Of the news	Number	Percentage
No answer	1	0.9%
Frequently	17	15.6%
Sometimes	25	22.9%
Depends on events	53	48.6%
Rarely	9	8.3%
Never	4	3.7%
Total	109	100%

Relationship Between the Preference for Political News and the Social Context of Discussion

Table 31 examines the relationship between the preference for political news and the social context of discussion. From the table a high percentage preferred family and friends as their main choice in their discussions of political news. 71.6% preferred friends and 21.1% preferred family to discuss news with. This could be due to the nature of this kind of relationship as people may feel more open with friends and family and also have more common interests, particularly with friends. Family and friends could also provide a good atmosphere in terms of comfort as in such contexts people wouldn't usually be judged or ridiculed. Also their conversations would be more confidential, particularly if such discussions drifted towards some sort of criticism on political issues which people think may bear risks if their views were heard more widely.

Table 31. Social context of discussion of the news among those who preferred political news

Social context of discussion	Number	Percentage
No answer	3	2.7%
Friends	78	71.6%
Colleagues	5	4.58%
Family	23	21.1%
Total	109	100.0%

Cultural News as the Type of News Preferred and the Frequency of Discussion

Tables 32 and 33 deal with those who chose cultural news as one of their most preferred forms of news. Table 38 analyses the relationship between the preference for cultural news and the frequency of discussion.

As can be seen in the table, a high percentage of 57.1% of the sample said that their discussions depended on events, whereas 19.0% said that sometimes they discussed the news. The relationships between cultural and political news as the types of news preferred and the frequency of discussion are in fact quite similar. A high percentage of the sample was again people who discussed the news sometimes or depending on events.

Table 32. Frequency of discussion of news among those who preferred cultural news

Frequency of discussion of news	Number	Percentage
Frequently	2	9.5%
Sometimes	4	19.0%
Depends on events	12	57.1%
Rarely	2	9.5%
Never	1	4.8%
Total	21	100.0%

Cultural News as Preferred Type of News and the Social Context of Discussion

Table 32 examines the relationship between the preference for cultural news and the social context of discussion.

As can be seen from the table, there was also a similarity between people who preferred cultural news and those who preferred political news in terms of the social context of discussion. Most preferred either family or friends to discuss cultural news with. 71.4% chose friends and 19.0% preferred family. Intimacy and common interest could be the main reasons behind their preferences.

Table 33. Social context of discussion of news among those who preferred cultural news

Social context of discussion	Number	Percentage
No answer	1	4.8%
Friends	15	71.4%
Colleagues	1	4.8%
Family	4	19.0%
Total	21	100.0%

In summary, few differences were found between those who preferred political and cultural news in terms of both the frequency of discussing the news and the social context of discussion.

Evaluation of Libyan Television Performance

Over half of the respondents (55%) described Libyan television performance in news coverage as good and 27% described it as very good. 11% said it was bad and only 7% said that it was very bad. In comparison with the time actually spent watching Libyan television, along with the significance of other satellite channels, we could conclude that these answers involved favouritism or national sentiment. In fact Libyan television was preferred by low percentages among the sample in comparison with other satellite channels such as Al-Jazeera and Al-Arabiya. Also the time spent in watching the news on Libyan television was limited. This indicates that there is a serious weakness in Libyan television performance in terms of the news which contradicts the high levels of approval given to Libyan television performance.

Table 34. Evaluation of Libyan television performance

Evaluation	Frequency	Percentage
Very good	42	26.6%
Good	87	55.1%
Poor	18	11.4%
Very poor	11	6.9%
Total	158	100.0%

Evaluation of Libyan Radio Performance

Table 34 below shows that 60% of the sample described Libyan radio as good in news coverage and 34% said it was very good. 6% said that it was bad and no one

described it as very bad .This illustrates that Libyan radio is quite impressive in contrast with Libyan television, particularly in local news coverage. Also the accessibility of radio could have tipped the scales in its favour.

Table 35. Evaluation of Libyan radio performance

Evaluation	Frequency	Percentage
Very good	45	34.2%
good	94	59.5%
poor	10	6.3%
Total	158	100.0%

Evaluation of Libyan Newspaper Performance

Table 35 shows that 70% of the sample considered Libyan newspapers as good and 20% as very good. Only 7% described them as bad and 3% very bad. In fact if we take into consideration the low significance of newspapers as sources of news and also the Libyan people's consideration of the country's mass media as a political taboo which should not be criticised, we may consider this evaluation as somewhat hypocritical. As discussed earlier in this chapter, Libyan people rely on television and radio or friends and family for their local news. This could give a good picture of the significance of each source in Libya in terms of news. Also, the experts interviewed gave the Libyan news papers low ratings as sources of news. This indicates that the Libyan newspapers perform poorly in terms of news coverage, which clearly contradicted the approval levels given to the Libyan newspapers by the questionnaire respondents. This issue is discussed later in this chapter in more detail.

Table 36. Evaluation of Libyan newspaper performance

Evaluation	Frequency	Percentage
Very good	31	19.6%
good	111	70.3%
poor	11	7.0%
Very poor	5	3.2%
Total	158	100.0%

The findings showed that students valued Libyan newspapers, radio and television. However, they did not spend much time watching television and did not rely on Libyan newspapers for domestic news. This may reflect a reluctance to criticise the Libyan mass media, which is a highly political topic, where expressing criticism may bear risk to them. As a result many people prefer to take the safe path and praise the Libyan mass media rather than criticise it. Also some may be motivated in their answers by their sense of patriotism and wishes to be courteous.

This section has shown the main issues revealed by the questionnaire data are the significance of satellite channels as sources of news, and the reasons for the reliance of the Libyan people on this particular type of source.

The findings indicate that Libyan people rely strongly on satellite television channels in receiving news. This may be due to the nature of these sources which enable people to watch many alternatives and also due to the competition between news channels to provide high quality services and good news coverage.

The findings also reveal that the major news sources were the regional satellite television channels, particularly Al-Jazeera and Al-Arabiya. This illustrates that the Arab news channels have achieved good standards in this field and become more competitive and successful. On the other hand this section revealed the significance of

the Libyan mass media as sources of news and has also dealt with their weaknesses and strengths.

Interview Results

Thirty interviews were conducted with the following: ten media producers (six males and four females); ten media experts (six males and four females); and ten older people (seven males and three females). The main reason for conducting interviews was to gain information about issues which would be difficult to obtain by relying on questionnaire respondents alone such as concerning the main sources of news before the emergence of satellite channels or the negative and positive impacts of satellite channels. Also information was sought on the strengths and weaknesses of Libyan mass media performance in terms of news coverage and the difficulties faced them. All these issues are relevant to the findings of the survey, and using interviews as method of collecting such data was considered more appropriate, as discussed earlier in this chapter. The semi-structured interview is a qualitative method which gives the researcher the opportunity to explore different perspectives and also allows interviewees more freedom in their answers: "... semi-structured interviews also allow individual respondents some latitude and freedom to talk about what is of interest or important to them. In other words, while the researcher does try to ask each respondent a certain set of questions, he or she also allows the conversation to flow more naturally, making room for the conversation to go in new and unexpected directions" (Hesse-Biber et al, 2006, pp125-126).

The Main Sources of News before the Emergence of Satellite Channels

In order to trace the changes which have occurred in terms of sources of news, it was significant to discuss this issue with older people in particular, who were deemed probably more capable of addressing the question.

Older people were chosen mainly from two public places where it was easy to meet them: mosques and the Department of Pensions. Older people tended to gather at mosques before and after prayers and also went to the Department of pensions to receive their monthly pensions. In order to save time and reduce costs the researcher chose a convenience sample of older people. A convenience sample “refers to the selection of those cases which are easiest to access under given conditions. This may simply be to reduce effort. However, from time to time it may be the only way to do an evaluation with limited resources of time and people” (Flick, 2002, pp 68-69).

A majority of these interviewees said that the radio was their main source of news, particularly Radio Egypt, Radio Tunisia and international providers such as the BBC and the Voice of America. As one interviewee argued, “radio is my main source of news, particularly Radio Egypt, the BBC, Radio Tunisia, and Radio Libya. I usually listen to the radio at mid-day and in the evening”. Some interviewees, however, said that personal contacts with relatives and friends were their main sources of news. As one interviewee said, “we usually say you can’t hide the news. In fact my main source is people themselves; we usually talk about what is going on here or there, and people say something has happened in Saudi or Egypt or Algeria”. A few interviewees said that public markets gave an ideal opportunity to meet people and get news, particularly that which concerned their lives, as well as from other Arab and Muslim countries. As one interviewee argued, “people talk about the news in the market. It is a significant

place for such kinds of conversations. Once a week we meet relatives, friends and other people and talk about everything". This contrasts with the students, who discussed the news mainly with family or friends.

Evaluation of the Emergence of Satellite Channels

The emergence of satellite channels is a highly controversial issue, particularly in conservative societies, due to their strong in all areas. This leads some people to concentrate on the negative side and the bad influence of satellite channels, such as encouraging crime or drug taking or the adoption of other values. These beliefs were more likely to be adopted among older people, whereas some concentrated on the positive side and the opportunities which have become available to gain wide access to information. This variation in perspectives is crucial in analysing the importance of the emergence of satellite channels and their influence on Libyan society, particularly in terms of culture and religion. Attitudes in these areas are probably the main influence in adopting particular stances towards the satellite channels.

Attitudes towards the Emergence of Satellite Channels as a Positive or Negative Phenomenon

This issue was discussed by both media producers and older people, who provided a variety of perspectives. In fact the emergence of satellite channels is a controversial issue because of the rapid changes which have occurred at all levels as a result of the impact of these channels. This makes some people consider them as a backward step leading to a deterioration of society's values and its culture whereas others see the other side of the story and talk about the positive aspects of satellite channels, particularly as a source of information.

Even though the large majority of the media producers considered the emergence of satellite channels as having both negative and positive effects, it would be more appropriate to divide them into three main categories: positive, negative and neutral views.

- **Positive views**

The positives are that the satellite channels create diversity and provide audiences with varieties of options and opinions. As one interviewee remarked, “the emergence of satellite channels is a positive phenomenon which is experienced by Libyans as a relief which breaks the monopolisation of news and information so that no government can control them any more”. Other positive aspects of satellite channels are their impact on people’s culture, religion, behaviour and beliefs. As one interviewee pointed out, “let me say that now a variety of options have become available to viewers. These channels have become sources of information and a means of leverage at all levels, and actually there are hundreds of channels in different subjects like religion, music, sports, news, drama and documentaries. Now it’s up to us whether we choose useful channels or bad ones, and this is exactly freedom of choice”.

On the other hand, a few interviewees considered satellite channels as a positive phenomenon providing audiences with news and information around the clock. As one interviewee said, “satellite channels are positive phenomena, no doubt about that. Now we can watch the news around the clock and they cover events everywhere. We also can watch some religious events such as pilgrimages; this is unbelievable”.

- **Negative views**

Some interviewees considered them as a wholly negative phenomenon. As one interviewee pointed out, “satellite channels are having a very negative impact. They actually have an influence on culture and religion, but the most vulnerable are children. We should pay more attention to the impact of satellite channels and we should simply realise that the age of innocent television and programmes is over”.

This stance was often adopted among older people who considered the phenomenon of satellite channels as a negative thing which has had a bad impact on culture and society. In fact the majority of older people considered the emergence of satellite channels as a negative phenomenon which has affected Libyan culture and values and encouraged people to adopt bad habits. As one interviewee pointed out, “satellite channels are very bad, they corrupt our children and you can see that this generation has adopted bad habits and families cannot control their children any more. This is a disaster”.

For some interviewees the emergence of television itself was a curse and has had a disastrous effect on traditions and society as a whole. Older people in particular considered television as a means of distraction which has gradually weakened the intimacy of social life and reduced time spent in face-to-face communication. One older female interviewee said that: “television itself is a curse. People used to meet up and spend a long time talking to each other. People used to visit each other just to talk. Nowadays television has affected everything in people’s lives and changed it completely. That is because it teaches people evil things and their habits become different. Our culture and behaviour has deteriorated because of television’s influence”.

For others television is responsible for the adoption of alien values and it encourages families to abandon their own culture and values and reshape their relationships. As another older female interviewee pointed out:

“Television is full of negativity, and is responsible for spreading immorality and indecency among the youth in particular. Today young ladies watch television with their mothers, brothers and sometimes even with their fathers. They watch music, dancing and immodest scenes. Television encourages children to adopt alien norms and disobey their parents and abandon their religion. Television is a big sin”.

Some interviewees went deeper into this issue and considered the new era of satellite channels as a means of spreading bad culture. They drew comparisons between the generations and painted a grim picture of the younger generations. As an older female interviewee said:

“Satellite channels are not a positive thing and have thoroughly corrupted our culture and our religion. Every day we hear about strange things which have happened because of imitating television. This generation simply learns lessons from television and then descends into crime or deviant behaviour. On the other hand people have also changed. For example, I couldn’t imagine once that I would listen to the radio in the presence of my parents or relatives. Nowadays children watch television with their parents. I can’t believe that. It’s shameless”.

There was a general consensus among older people regarding the influence of satellite channels and their impact on the relationships between parents and their children. They also laid the blame on Libyan families and their adoption of new ways of life. Some of them argued that this has led to a deterioration of cultural values, particularly in terms of respecting older people. As one female interviewee said:

“Satellite channels corrupt our children and they have brought bad habits to our society. Children emulate television programmes and our families have adopted bad manners in terms of bringing up their children. Young people do not respect their elders or parents any more. This can be seen as a result of television programmes. I feel sorry for this generation”.

The negative influence of satellite channels represents a mantra among older people, even in terms of choosing modern names for children as can be seen in one interviewee’s argument: “Television is a negative thing, there is no doubt about that. People have adopted an alien culture, things which we did not know. Even people’s names have changed. Today people even pick up their children’s names from television programmes. This is a horrible thing”.

- **Neutral views**

Some older people argued that the satellite channels, as with any other development, are “like a knife with two edges” as they bring bad habits and values but on the other hand provide us with news and good programmes. As one elder argued, “it’s true satellite channels teach our children many bad habits such as swearing but also provide us with news and other useful programmes which you can watch with your family or relatives”.

One general attribution is negative, which is manifest in harming people's culture and beliefs, and one is positive in providing audiences with news, information and entertainment. Some media producers agreed with the older people's reading of the bad influence of satellite channels; however they considered this phenomenon as inevitable and the fruit of development and civilisation. As one interviewee said, "it's a normal phenomenon; neither positive nor negative. It is just normal, it's part of the development of our life, similar to cars, aircraft and other means of transport, and logically there is no chance to reverse it".

The Emergence of TV Satellite Channels and their Impact on the Significance of the Libyan Media for the Libyan People

Actually one of the many effects of satellite channels is the relationship between people and television, particularly in the time spent watching television. In their answers to the question of whether the emergence of satellite channels has affected their relationship with television, particularly in terms of the amount of daily time spent watching television, a majority of older people agreed that there has been an effect as they now spend more time watching television. As one interviewee said, "of course it has affected me and all people. We have come to rely more and more on satellite channels for the news and I have started to spend more time watching television; more than four hours per day. I watch the news and some religious programmes, and of course Libyan television".

Whereas others said that the emergence of satellite channels had made no difference. As one interviewee said, "I don't think satellite channels make any difference. I prefer radio and you can see that all Libyan people have more than one radio set in their

homes. This means that satellite channels do not make any difference, particularly for people like me who very much like the radio”.

There is a consensus among media producers that satellite channels have affected the significance of the Libyan mass media.

One interviewee said that, “of course it has affected the Libyan media, because they can compete with these channels. People now do not watch or rely on Libyan television simply because they look for the best options with good programmes. The Libyan print media, for example, has less influence and fewer readers. The only people who still read Libyan newspapers are those who have got used to them or who have the habit of reading them. Also some people still enjoy listening to the radio because of their careers as taxi drivers or lorry drivers and so on, but we must admit that the influence of satellite channels is far more significant than any other medium”.

The significance of the Libyan mass media as a source of news is exclusively in domestic news coverage. The Libyan people watch Libyan television occasionally for its coverage of religious or local events such as Ramadan (the month of fasting). As one media producer argued, “Libyan television had poor performance from the beginning and then when the satellite channels arrived completely eliminated it. I can say that nobody watches Libyan television the whole day long; people watch it probably for certain events or to watch particular programmes for a few minutes and then go back to other channels. I can assure you that the only period when the Libyan people watch Libyan television is during Ramadan”. This fits with questionnaire respondent saying that ‘it depends on events’ when asked how often they watched the news.

The Most Reliable News Sources

This question was directed to older people in order to find out what sources are more popular and thought to be reliable among ordinary people. In their answers to the question a majority of older people said that radio was the most reliable source of news, particularly the BBC and the Voice of Germany. As one interviewee said, "I think the BBC and the Voice of Germany are the most reliable sources of news. I have been listening to them on a daily basis for at least thirty years, and I think they remain popular". Some considered television as the most reliable source of news. As one interviewee argued, "television sets are everywhere now, and we watch television while eating or in bed. This makes television the main source of news because we have no time for other sources". This mean some people think that television is more reliable than other sources simply because they spend more time watching television than other news outlets such as newspapers or radio.

Only a few of the older people considered that radio and television were equally the most reliable sources of news. As one interviewee argued "sometimes I watch television and sometimes I spend more time listening to the radio. I would say both of them are significant".

The Main News Channel Chosen

This question was also addressed to older people to identify what their main preferred channels are. In fact a large majority of the interviewees said that Libyan television, Al-Jazeera and Al-Arabiya were their main choices and they justified their choices with the following reasons. They were thought to provide a good presentation of news, including a good standard of language and decent modes of dress. As one interviewee explained, "I prefer these channels because of their good presentation of news. I can

understand everything and also the men and women who present the news are dressed properly and decently. I like the idea of presenting news in traditional Libyan clothes on Libyan television. It's great".

This finding was consistent with the findings of the survey. Students also considered Al-Jazeera and Al-Arabiya as the main sources of news. This illustrates the significance of such news channels for Libyan audiences.

Another interviewee argued that these channels were watched in order to avoid any awkward moments, as some unpredictable scenes in advertisements could be very embarrassing particularly in the presence of other members of their families. As one interviewee said, "I usually watch Al-Jazeera and Al-Arabiya because they are decent and I can watch them with my family or with guests". These views demonstrate that many Libyan audiences are deeply concerned about many negative impacts of satellite channels, particularly their influence on cultural and social values. This also consistent with the negative views about satellite channels which were discussed earlier in this section.

Others concentrated on other issues, such as watching local news and domestic issues, where Libyan television was the only source which could provide such programmes. As one interviewee put it, "Libyan television plays a great role, particularly in terms of domestic news and informing people of what is going on in their country".

Comparison of Libyan Television with Foreign Channels in the Field of News

This question was directed to older people in order to identify the differences between Libyan television and foreign channels in terms of news. Older people were thought more likely to represent the attitudes and evaluation of ordinary people towards both domestic and foreign channels.

The majority of the interviewees considered Libyan television as a significant source of domestic news, and also one of the most decent television channels in the region. As one interviewee said, "it is the most decent television across the region which you can watch comfortably with your family, and it is also the main source of domestic news. I prefer Libyan television even though I watch other channels such as Al-Jazeera and MBC for a few minutes to watch the international news". Whereas a few interviewees said that Libyan television was good and reliable for local news coverage, but not for international news. As one interviewee pointed out, "I would say that Libyan television is a good source of local news but not for international news. In fact Al-Jazeera and other channels are much better by far". The survey findings reveal that Libyan television and radio were the main sources of domestic news, whereas channels such as Al-Jazeera and Al-Arabiya were the first choices for political and cultural news. We may conclude here that different sources were used for local and international news.

Difficulties Facing the Libyan Media

This issue is significant for the present analysis and in clarifying other issues such as the reliance on foreign channels in the field of news. This question was directed to the Libyan media producers who are probably more capable of identifying any difficulties influencing the effectiveness of Libyan media or weakening its performance. In fact the

answers were diverse on this point. A majority of the interviewees considered that financial problems were the major factor behind the Libyan media's difficulties. As one interviewee pointed out, "The main problem is financial problems and we have a phrase in our dialect which says (money could build roads in the sea). Let me say that the budget allotted to the media is insufficient and does not meet the needs and ambitions of the Libyan media. The Libyan government provides the media with certain amounts of money and the media have to work within that specific limited budget. But, if we want competitive media we should spend money on it. It is a long term investment which requires lots of effort and lots of money".

Other media producers considered that the lack of professional staff is the main problem. As one interviewee said, "the main difficulty is suitable highly qualified people. The Libyan media lacks professional and qualified staff, and we can see that the Libyan newspapers, radio and television all obviously have poor performance. I am not convinced that technology is the main reason. Look at Tunisia, which is a country with potential similar to ours, whereas their media are much better than ours. It is about qualified and professional people".

The lack of advanced technology is considered as another factor which affects Libyan media performance. As one media producer explained "we don't have the most sophisticated and advanced technology. In terms of the media we do not have good studios and the same problem exists in publishing for Libyan print media. We have bad outdated technology in both the print media and visual media".

Some interviewees considered that the legislation applied to the Libyan media is the main barrier affecting its performance. This legislation forces the Libyan media to work within specific financial limits, which encourages the importation of programmes rather than producing them. As one interviewee pointed out, "Production is the main barrier.

In fact there are many difficulties which face Libyan television in terms of production. The production departments in Libyan television have to work within certain rules and are sponsored with specific amounts of money and under strict rules. This means that Libyan television neglects lots of types of programmes just because their production is costly. As a result the quality of programmes is poor. We should concentrate on sponsoring and producing programmes using all means and supporting the Libyan private sector in terms of production.”

In their answers concerning the evaluation of the Libyan media in the field of current affairs, media producers gave different answers and concentrated on different factors which may be useful in casting light on the reasons behind the scramble for satellite channels. In fact a majority of the interviewees described Libyan media performance in the field of news as very bad. As one interviewee said, “the performance of Libyan media is quite poor because of its exclusive reliance on one source of news, which is the Libyan news agency. Therefore we usually listen to the same news stories in all Libyan mass media, and this makes the news quite boring”. Even those who described the Libyan media as good concentrated on less significant issues like using formal language and good pronunciation. As one interviewee pointed out, “the Libyan media performance is good, particularly in terms of using formal language, but if we talked about the content of the news it would be a different issue”.

Other media producers thought that standards fluctuated. As one interviewee said, “My evaluation of the Libyan media in terms of news is that Libyan radio is quite good and has relatively large audiences, whereas we have very poor print media and less successful television”. The evaluations of the Libyan media experts also highlighted several reasons for the weaknesses of the Libyan media and their bad performance. There was a consensus that Libyan media performance was poor. As one interviewee said, “the Libyan media in general is quite poor. All Libyan mass media need to be

reconstructed and should put their own fingerprint on their work in all aspects including the presentation of the news. Currently we see very bad quality with dull colourless programmes”.

The reasons for this included that news programmes on the television and radio are very long and unattractive. As one interviewee pointed out, “the news on both radio and television is usually repeated and very long, and sometimes two or three news stories take more than an hour. I believe that news editors in the Libyan media do not follow contemporary conventions for news and probably have not even heard of them”. Also there was considered to be a lack of news analysis and diversity. Recycling the same news stories from the same sources make the news less attractive, as one interviewee revealed, “relying solely on the Libyan news agency as a source of news and using the same content and the same version of news stories makes the news the same in all of the Libyan mass media. This makes the news rather unattractive”.

When asked about what aspects of Libyan television news coverage were disliked, a majority of the Libyan experts cited the lack of live news coverage and diversity, the sole reliance on the Libyan news agency as the source of news, poor performance in the field of news presentation, and the lack of updating. Furthermore, a few interviewees thought that Libyan television was unwilling to change and develop itself. As one interviewee said, “I don’t think that the people who run Libyan television are aware of the advances and attractiveness of other channels. It would not be difficult to copy their methods and style to succeed. I think they do not want to change, they do not want to try another path and have maintained the same policy which has led to complete failure”.

Some interviewees thought that news editions were very dull and lacked attractiveness. As one interviewee said, “the news on our television is quite long and

lacks pictures. This makes me feel as if I am watching the same news every night". Whereas another interviewee thought that the news in Libyan television was very long. "Take bulletins on our television as an example. They always last for one hour, approximately. This is longer than any news programme on other channels. It's ludicrous". These views are quite similar to those expressed by the media producers, particularly concerning the methods and styles of news presentation.

When asked about what aspects of Libyan newspaper and magazine news coverage they did not like, a majority of interviewees expressed their dissatisfaction with Libyan newspapers, giving many criticisms of the Libyan print media and its performance. Too much similarity in both style and substance between different publications was considered as the main problem facing the Libyan print media. As one interviewee said, "Libyan newspapers repeat themselves and lack individuality and distinctive fingerprints, they have the same articles and even the same style. Actually I wonder why we have all these newspapers when they are all the same. Why not merge them into one newspaper and make it more impressive and competitive?"

Some elaborated on the reasons behind the bad performances of the print media. One interviewee explained that, "both Libyan newspapers and magazines rely on stealing regional and international news from foreign sources, and they lack professional coverage and good pictures. Sometimes I read the newspaper and I find very few pictures, also the text is very bad and full of mistakes. I consider Libyan magazines to be much better but delays in their publication are very common".

Other interviewees said that Libyan newspapers have quite poor performance in terms of news. As one interviewee said, "we can't find so-called news coverage in Libyan newspapers. They simply copy other mass media news and re-publish it. You will find the same news on the radio or television in the same style in all Libyan newspapers".

Some interviewees considered that delays in publication and limited distribution were endemic problems. As one interviewee said, “you can’t rely on print media, particularly in terms of news, simply because they are usually out of date and their distribution is exclusively in the major cities”.

When asked what aspects of Libyan radio news coverage they did not like, the answers varied. The majority of interviewees said that Libyan radio lacked both diversity and the live coverage of news. As one interviewee said, “it is very rare to listen to the live coverage of events or even reports from sites of incidents, and Libyan radio has no correspondents abroad which make its news coverage lack reliability and pace”.

Another factor also considered as a profound weakness was the presentation of news in the same format as in other mass media, therefore neglecting the potential of radio as a medium which has its own characteristics. As one interviewee pointed out, “news takes the same format in all Libyan mass media, and is usually very long and unattractive. Unlike international radio there is no special format for the news which is different from the print media or television”.

Reasons behind the Libyan People’s Reliance on Foreign News Channels

This question was directed to both media producers and experts in order to make it easier to draw a complete picture of both domestic and foreign channels and their significance to the Libyan people as news sources. A majority of media producers said that watching the news is the main reason behind the high profile of foreign channels among the Libyan people. They realise that Libyan television does not provide them with good news services, especially in the field of international events. This can be

seen in one media producer's argument that, "the Libyan people watch satellite channels because of their reliability in providing audiences with a high quality of services in news, interviews, and analysis. This makes the news stories more attractive, but the overriding factor is that these channels are free from pandering to governments. These channels simply provide live coverage of events which concern Arab audiences, such as the wars in Afghanistan, Iraq and Palestine, and also other international news. On the other hand we can't see this on Libyan television and the Libyan people want to watch channels with good qualities".

The media experts were clear in their analysis of the reasons behind the Libyan people resorting to watching foreign channels. The interviewees thought that there are two main groups of factors leading to the Libyan people's reliance on foreign channels. The first is what could be called the attractiveness of foreign channels. As one interviewee said, "of course the audiences would hurry to good services and more attractive options which clearly provide high quality and professional programmes". The second group concerns the Libyan media's deficiencies and weaknesses. As one interviewee pointed out, "sometimes I feel as if the Libyan media targets nobody, pays no attention to Libyan audiences' needs, and just carries on providing low budget programmes. This makes the entire Libyan media repellent".

Foreign channels are considered attractive in the following respects:

- The skilled performance and professional presentation of news. As one interviewee pointed out, "we usually see good editing of new stories in very attractive and simple ways and also very professional news readers who are highly qualified".

- Freshness and speed of news coverage. As one interviewee argued, “satellite channels now provide news every hour and have live coverage of events across the world. This makes them highly attractive”.
- It is easy to receive these channels, as one interviewee revealed, “Probably because they are free on air and easy to receive”, and the necessary equipment is “very cheap”.
- The abundance and diversity of information presented by these channels. As one interviewee said, “having hundreds of options which provide all types of news, sports, music and drama makes satellite channels a real relief for audiences”.

The weaknesses of the Libyan media include:

- A lack of professional teams, reporters and correspondents, which can be seen in one interviewee’s argument that “as far as I am concerned Libyan television has no correspondent in any country and has limited live coverage of the news and also a poor presentation of news”.
- Insufficient usage of technology in news presentation, such as in production facilities and graphics and other factors which make news more attractive. As one interviewee said, the “majority of news stories are without pictures and the only thing they do to fill gaps is to use library pictures or maps, or use no graphics at all. This make the news look the same every day”.
- News stories usually lack images, particularly in television and the print media. As one interviewee explained, “sometimes you can see the same picture in all the Libyan newspapers and on the television. We usually see the same pictures in the news for months. In fact there is no fingerprint for each medium at all”.
- The news is always very long and not based on the appropriate criteria for news reporting. As one interviewee said, “this is because the editing of news ignores

conventions about the criteria for news editing. This makes news stories very long and uninteresting”.

- News stories and images may be repeated many times, which makes the news even more unattractive. As one interviewee put it, “we usually see the same picture for a long time and sometimes in the same news we can see the same pictures two or three times simply because there are no new pictures”.

The Ability of the Libyan Media to Compete with Other Arab and International Media

All interviewees thought that the Libyan media would be unable to compete with international media. The large majority of the interviewees thought that the lack of assets such as professional teams and advanced technology were the main reasons for this. As one interviewee pointed out, “there are various reasons which make the Libyan media less competitive, but the overriding issue is the lack of technology and professional teams. Also the Libyan media take competition with regional and international media for granted, which makes drawing comparisons between the Libyan media and regional and international media unfair because of the differences in both potential and aims”. Some interviewees considered that its bad performance is the main reason. One interviewee said that “the bad performance overall, particularly in the field of news, plays a crucial role. You can see that the news on Libyan television usually lasts for one hour without any pictures and the newsreader is remote and unemotional reading news which is full of bad events. Would you expect anyone to find that interesting? No way.” Whereas others thought that Libyan legislation in the field of the media blocked the way to change and improvement. As one interviewee said, “we have very old legislation which was issued in 1972 and is unable to be commensurate with the digital age and advanced technology. It does not even identify

who is a journalist and there is no mention of free access to information or to the rights and protection of journalists”.

Steps which Should be Taken to Improve the Libyan Media

A majority of the interviewees said that the Libyan media should be funded more generously by government, and should be provided with more professional teams and well trained staff. As one interviewee revealed, “I would say we should take three main steps. Firstly we should reconsider and probably re-establish Libyan media policy; secondly we should rely on Arab experts and copy successful examples such as Al-Jazeera; and finally Libyan media should be improved by bringing in advanced technology, qualified staff and more training”. Whereas a few interviewees said that the first step which should be taken is to fund and conduct research which could provide significant data for a new strategy. As one interviewee argued, “the first thing we should do is conduct a comprehensive study which deals with all aspects in the field of media and identify the weaknesses and then rebuild the Libyan media according to those findings”.

Half of the interviewees thought that the law should be reconsidered, revised, and improved to give the Libyan media more flexibility and an atmosphere conducive to creativity and competitiveness. As one interviewee said, “the Libyan media should be liberated from the outdated legislation which has been the main reason behind their complete failure, and then the Libyan mass media can be reconstructed”.

Others interviewees said that the relevant legislation should be reconsidered and revised to provide the Libyan media with a more ideal atmosphere. One interviewee specified he meant, that “I mean the political atmosphere, in particular by clarifying

what's taboo and what is not, and secondly the Libyan media should be provided with the proper legislation to protect journalists and give them more power to have access to information”.

A few interviewees said that the first step would be to remove the immunity of the Libyan media so that it was considered subject to criticism rather than this being taboo. As one interviewee argued, “before we deal with the weaknesses of our media we should remove its immunity and consider it like any other sector which should be subject to criticism. This would make the media realise its weaknesses and correct itself and then we may talk about other factors like technology or qualified staff or funding”.

Other interviewees thought that several steps should be taken to solve the Libyan media's problems. These included spending more money, particularly in media production rather than importing programming, and in developing more professional production teams, as well as training more skilled staff. As one interviewee said “The Libyan media needs professional and qualified staff, good correspondents at least in some hot-spots across the world, and advanced technology like new studios. But the first thing we should establish is an atmosphere which enables and encourages people to work more effectively. This includes legislation and giving media workers the status which they deserve”.

These findings have provided a wide range of information about news sources, and particularly satellite channels and the significance of the Libyan media as sources of news. They also provide some clarification of issues such as the reasons behind the reliance of the Libyan people on satellite channels and also evaluations of Libyan media performance in terms of the news. The interview findings are highly significant

for the findings from the questionnaire and profoundly useful in clarifying some issues which have arisen.

The next section compares the findings from the interviews and the questionnaire study to provide a clearer picture of the Libyan people and their attitudes towards satellite channels and the Libyan media in terms of news.

Discussion of the Findings

The findings from the interviews have provided vital information about many aspects which would be difficult to gain by relying solely on questionnaire data. In fact the interviewees elaborated many factors which play a crucial role in terms of the evaluation of the performance of both Libyan and foreign mass media.

The findings from the interviews are also commensurate with those from the questionnaire survey in many respects. This is highly significant in strengthening this study's arguments, particularly in terms of Libyan media performance.

Both sets of findings show that satellite channels have become an integral part of the Libyan people's daily lives. This could be interpreted as a sign of higher standards of living or on the other hand may reflect a hunger among Libyan people to improve their knowledge and awareness about the outside world.

The findings from the interviews revealed the attractiveness of the satellite channel programmes, particularly of news. On the other hand, the findings also revealed the weaknesses in Libyan media performance and the reasons lying behind its incompetence. These factors could explain the reliance on satellite channels as a source of news and also the small amounts of time spent watching Libyan channels.

The interview findings also reflected factors relating to the nature of Libyan society, particularly in terms of the social context of watching television and the levels of intimacy among audiences. However, the interview findings showed that a substantial percentage of the interviewees considered satellite channels as a negative phenomenon. This was true particularly among older people. This is understandable in such a conservative society. However, the majority of the interviewees considered satellite channels as a lifeline which enabled them to have a wider range of options and alternatives free from government influence.

It seems that Libyan people enthusiastically watch satellite channels. This could be seen through the amounts of time spent watching them and also through respondents' high levels of appreciation of the satellite channels as a phenomenon.

Cultural factors shape the Libyan people's attitudes towards satellite channels and whether or not particular channels would be accepted or refused. These criteria affect not only Western channels but also many regional channels which have adopted similar cultural styles. This can obviously be seen in the low ratings gained by some Arab satellite channels, particularly Lebanese channels such as LBC and Future.

Libyan audiences, and particularly elders, usually avoid any channel which broadcasts programmes which are considered indecent. Even immodest clothes or dancing are considered as textual cues which carry sexual connotations. Such factors are, on the other hand, a motive for watching Libyan channels where the news readers, for example, wear traditional clothes.

The nature of Libyan society plays a crucial role in the Libyan people's attitudes and also in terms of the social context of watching satellite channels. In fact a high percentage of the interviewees justified their preferences as due to the respectability of

these outlets. On the other hand social intimacy also plays a role for Libyan people in terms of watching the news, and a high percentage said that their local sources of news included either friends or relatives.

Personal contacts, including friends and family, were considered as the second most important source of news after television, whereas not many people discussed the news with work colleagues. This was particularly so for women. This could be interpreted as a serious gap in Libyan media performance, particularly in the field of news. The high reliance on personal contacts for getting local news seems to mean that people seek information which is usually unavailable in the Libyan media. This could have backlash effects such as creating an ideal atmosphere for rumours, which can have undesirable consequences for any society. Radio is also an important source of local news.

The Libyan media rely strongly on the government in terms of informing people. This creates a kind of complacency and leads the Libyan mass media to wait for government sources to provide news rather than seeking and following news stories. As a consequence Libyan people rely on other options and personal contacts. In fact radio and the print media were less significant as sources of news.

This means that there are also weaknesses in their performance, which were elaborated upon by the interviewees. The lack of different perspectives and analysis were offered as reasons behind the poor performance of the Libyan media. It may be argued that taking all such reasons and aspects into account, a clearer picture could be drawn of the Libyan media, so that an effective cure for their problems might be found. Many interviewees, and particularly the media experts, said that the Libyan media could not now compete with international companies due to their weaknesses

and bad performance. This has led to a high reliance on foreign outlets, particular in the field of news.

The findings from the interviews also included suggestions for steps which could be taken to improve Libyan media performance. A variety of solutions and priorities were addressed by the interviewees. We may consider all these steps in a comprehensive plan which deals with all significant elements in order to establish a long term policy for the Libyan media. There was a consensus among students, older people, media experts and media producers that satellite channels were significant phenomena which play a crucial role in terms of news coverage in particular. However there were also some differences between these groups. Cultural and social change and the negative influence of satellite channels were the main preoccupations of older people, whereas the weaknesses of the Libyan mass media and difficulties facing them were the main issue among both Libyan experts and media producers.

Conclusion

This chapter has discussed the steps used to carry out the survey process, including a questionnaire study and interviews, the aims of the survey and the sample chosen, including the significance of students as the sample population and the reasons for choosing them.

This chapter has also analysed the questionnaire data, and the main issues revealed are the significance of satellite channels as sources of news, and the reasons for the reliance of the Libyan people on this particular type of source. The nature of the technology of satellite channels enables people to receive a variety of channels from all over the world. The competition between news channels in particular has created a

healthy atmosphere in the Arab region as news programmes become available with high standards in terms of both methods and style of presentation. These channels have attracted Libyan people and allow them to draw comparisons between such channels and domestic media. This chapter has discussed these factors and circumstances in great detail.

The findings also reveal the significance of regional and international channels as sources of news. The evaluation of the Libyan mass media as sources of news has also been discussed, and this chapter has also dealt with their weaknesses and strengths.

The Libyan mass media gained high approval among audiences for its appreciation of the Libyan people's culture, norms and values. During religious occasions such as the month of Ramadan Libyan television in particular gains high percentages of viewers. The findings also showed that Libyan mass media were significant outlets for domestic news, particularly on radio and television. On the other hand Libyan mass media have many weaknesses in terms of international news coverage. The findings revealed that Libyan mass media were considered less significant as a source of regional and international news. Libyan people spent less time in watching news on Libyan television and few considered Libyan newspapers a good source of domestic news.

The findings from the interviews were also explored in this chapter and were compared with those of the questionnaire study. Issues arising in both questionnaire and interview data are highly significant to the present research. Firstly, a high percentage of Libyan people watch the news, and their main sources were satellite television channels. Secondly the Arab satellite news channels were their main sources of news. This means that Arab satellite channels such as Al-Jazeera and Al-Arabiya were successful and competitive news channels, particularly when we take

into consideration that international news channels such as CNN and BBC are also available to Arab audiences. Thirdly, core country news outlets were less significant in terms of news even though many of these outlets broadcast in Arabic, such as Al-Hura. The findings from both interviews and the questionnaire link these issues together and the strengths and weaknesses of each type of outlet are discussed in the next chapter.

CHAPTER SEVEN

GENERAL DISCUSSION & CONCLUSION

Introduction

This chapter discusses the findings from the survey data, and provides a link between these findings and the theoretical part of the study by offering explanations of the Libyan people's attitudes in terms of watching the news. This includes the evaluation of the performance of Libyan media news coverage and the regional alternatives, particularly in satellite channels which have become the main sources of news for the Libyan audience. The chapter also deals with the Libyan peoples preferences for certain news outlets, where factors such as culture and religion can be seen to influence audiences. In order to answer one of the main questions of this study, this chapter discusses the most successful examples of satellite television channels. This could provide a clear picture of the situation if the Libyan authorities wish to establish effective satellite television channels.

Discussion

The choice of subject for this study emerged from two basic facts. The first is that the world has witnessed the domination of core countries over peripheral countries, particularly in the field of information. There has also been a phenomenon which is more precisely described as American domination of the field of information.

The USA reinforced its influence after the Second World War, particularly after the establishment of the so called Marshal Plan. One of the key factors in American domination is information and media production. This field in particular has been one of the most significant tools used to spread American culture across the world. This sector has also, become one of the main success stories of the American economy,

which the former American president Bill Clinton once called the “king of the global economy” (Schiller, 1996, p103).

The second fact is that the peripheral countries have started to seek alternatives in order to reduce this domination. The study has selected the Arabic region as an example of endeavours targeted at limiting this type of domination and enhancing regional exchange and cooperation in the field of news and information, which could be considered as one of the means for the prevention of domination. The study concentrates largely on a particular geographical area of peripheral countries which share many characteristics. This is the Arabic region, and Libya has been selected as an example of the countries in this region.

The phenomenon of domination has been associated in one way or another with the existence of free market logic based on the capitalist concept of the freedom of competition. This concept appears to be fair, being based on the right of competition for all, but actually tends to be confined only to rich or powerful groups of people, which results in the circle of competition being confined to certain players.

This situation does not benefit countries other than the core countries and could easily expand the gap between the core and peripheral countries in the future.

These circumstances have arisen in a context which has resulted in the domination of a few powerful institutions, companies and information corporations dominating the market and carving the world up between themselves. They have considered the information product as a commodity which must be paid for and marketed, which means that it is to be available only to those who can pay the prices set.

The viewpoint of these monopolies concerning information material, including the news, as commodities has negatively impacted on its content. This is one reason why the mass media have tended to produce entertainment programmes, rather than more useful programmes and products.

These large monopolies have become global and have overwhelmed smaller media producers, a situation which has resulted in further concentration of the mass media, confining them to a few broadcasters dividing the world market between them. This has negatively affected the democratic spirit, based on difference and diversity, and furthermore has prejudiced the concept of capitalism itself in respect of the importance of competition. Domination in its broader sense has come to mean the domination of core countries over peripheral countries. But in addition another phenomenon has actually arisen, which is American domination. Many of the core countries themselves have suffered from American domination, which they have attempted to limit using many type of arrangements to hinder the flow of American culture in its invasion of local cultures. After the Second World War the United States started to create the appropriate conditions to secure the global ascendancy of its large companies with the launch of the Marshal Plan, and has made its best endeavours to make America the new world centre.

The export of American culture and products was the first step to achieve these aims. This has been enhanced by American technological excellence so as to enable America to complete its project of removing all restraints hindering its competitive advantage. America has been more enthusiastic in the adoption of globalization and liberating international markets, due to the domination of American companies and products in these markets. The issue has moved to another dimension in the information field, and American products have become difficult to compete with, shown for example in remarkable levels of demand for products such as American movies on

the Hollywood pattern. American domination has itself become a pattern which is difficult to overcome, to the extent that many use the term 'Americanization' to mean the domination of American culture. As Campbell put it, Americanization refers to mass production and mass consumption with an American footprint (Campbell, 2004, p9).

American technological supremacy has come to be just another tool for the enhancement of American domination, and the world has changed so as to be a consumer market for American styles. For example, the CNN channel has become a phenomenon in itself, indicating American domination throughout the world in the field of news. Its live coverage of many global events and its style of broadcasting have influenced the world. Many countries across the world have established new alternatives which mirror the CNN style and also provide domestic news outlets to compete with CNN.

The CNN live coverage of the Gulf War in 1991 was a turning point in the history of the mass media, and is considered by Seib as the last grasp of western communications hegemony (Seib, 2008, p7). In fact CNN's live coverage encouraged Arab governments to establish their own alternatives which could compete with CNN.

The CNN style has become a pattern to be adopted elsewhere, and many countries have been encouraged to establish channels similar to it, following its approach to news coverage with the intention of being able to compete.

Even the BBC and Euronews as well as the Al-Jazeera channel have come to adopt some of the same trends as the CNN channel. However, in fact, domination in the field of news is an old phenomenon, starting when the main news agencies carved the world up between themselves so that national news agencies became merely funnels

for the major news agencies. These international news agencies exercised monopoly control over news coverage, and therefore peripheral countries have been encouraged due to many factors to call for the removal of this monopolization.

The introduction of the concept of the New World Information and Communication order (NWICO) in UNESCO resulted in a broader international discussion of the need for a system to allow equal opportunities and more space for peripheral countries. Establishing a degree of regional exchange in the information field is an alternative to the absolute dependence on the main channels in the core countries. In fact the controversy over the adoption of NWICO by UNESCO gave the peripheral countries an ideal opportunity to put the issue of the unequal exchange of information and news onto the international agenda, even though UNESCO completely failed to provide a solution to this issue. This led peripheral countries to establish new strategies in order to combat the one-way flow of information, including regional cooperation to minimize the dependence on the information resources of the core countries.

At the same time they have been able to nurture the appropriate environment for the success of such initiatives. However, the peripheral countries have failed to minimize government control over the mass media, so that political groups exert excessive control over all information products, including the news. This has also minimized the significance of these new alternatives. We can therefore argue that the call for a New World Information and Communication order (NWICO) may be logical, but is also over-idealistic.

By taking the Arab region as an example of the absolute failure of collective efforts and regional exchange in terms of the news in particular, we may see the differences between the reality and the rhetoric. The Arabic world represents an ideal case for studying information domination for several reasons. Firstly, the Arabic area is

linguistically, religiously and culturally relatively homogeneous which should make any alternative theoretically simpler. Secondly there are close similarities between the potentialities of Arabic countries and their information experiences. All Arabic countries established their mass media systems during the period after the Second World War and upon attaining national independence. This makes the background of Arabic countries similar to some extent in terms of mass media experiments. Thirdly, the Arabic area appears to be a good example of southern countries that have adopted new information systems and which have complained about the information domination of the core countries. Fourthly, institutions such as the Arab League have been presumed to support and facilitate the means for Arabic cooperation and to unify efforts in different fields, including the removal of difficulties and obstacles particularly in the field of the exchange of news and information as an alternative to importing them. Despite these ambitions for cooperation and exchange, the flows of information in the Arabic region remain very limited as a result of political differences and technical difficulties.

The Arabic nations' policies towards foreign information sources have tended to exercise strict controls over information, and therefore radio long remained the only means through which the Arab peoples received international and even local news without any government restrictions. Therefore the BBC and Voice of America broadcasts were considered to be the main information sources during the period before the existence of Arabic satellite channels. These international radio channels became very popular among Arab audiences. This was proved by the present study's findings, which revealed that a majority of elderly people interviewed used to rely on international radio channels as the main sources of news before the emergence of television satellite channels. The study has also revealed that a high percentage of the survey sample watched satellite channels which illustrates the publicity of satellite television channels and has demonstrated that Libyan residents can receive a large

number of satellite channels without any restraints. In fact the new technology of satellite channels has posed another dilemma for Arabic countries, as these sources cannot be controlled or adjusted.

Libya is one of the Arabic countries which has made great efforts to render its information systems subject to and to reflect state policy under direct government supervision and control. However, Libya has found itself in a new situation in the era of satellite channels. Over the decades, the Libyan people used deepened on radio and certain international stations in following international news, avoiding the official sources which controlled information. Once the satellite channels entered the arena, the Libyan people were more able to compare local and international mass media and have not been forced to depend only on the local mass media in the field of current affairs. This is a new development, because now a large number of satellite channels with high levels of professionalism are available to Libyans. In this situation language constitutes a main factor encouraging Libyans to provide high levels of demand for the Arabic satellite channels.

These channels use different languages but, as with the majority of Arabic communities, Libyans prefer the simplest and most understandable alternatives. Therefore, they prefer to watch the Arabic channels, particularly for the news. As the findings of the study have revealed that the majority of the survey sample preferred to watch the news in Arabic. This shows that language has a basic role in communication for large sections of the Libyan community. On the one hand, the remarkable reliance of the Libyan community on Arabic information channels indicates the success of these channels. Conversely there is a lack of competition between Arabic and international channels because few of the latter use the Arabic language. This means that the Arabic channels then compete between themselves.

The Arab satellite television channels have become the main source of news among Arab audiences. Al-Jazeera and Al-Arabiya were the main options chosen as news sources, whereas few of the survey sample considered CNN or the BBC as their first choice.

Some core countries have started to encourage and support satellite channels using the Arabic language, such as the American Al-Hura channel and Al-Alam. This may be a healthy sign of the beginning of real competition which could significantly benefit Arabic communities. Nowadays there is a chance for many peripheral countries to improve their mass media and performance in the field of news. The emergence of the new technology of satellite channels could in theory enable any country to establish a reliable and competitive source of news.

Satellite television technology has created a new atmosphere in the Arab region. As Lynch has pointed out, "Rather than imposing a single, overwhelming consensus, the new satellite television stations, along with newspapers, internet sites, and many other sites of public communication, challenged Arabs to argue, to disagree, and to question the status quo" (Lynch, 2008,p9).

This could be proven by the finding of this study in terms of watching and discussion of the news contents.

The study reveals that high a percentage of the sample watched the news. This demonstrates the significance of satellite channels in this field as the Arab people can now receive a variety of news outlets from different perspectives. This new atmosphere was considered by the majority of the interviewees as healthy and productive.

Audience discussion and debate over news contents could help to shape and reinforce people's attitudes and also to widen their horizons increase their awareness of the outside world. The discussion of news stories could also play a significant role in the expansion of the audience's knowledge. In fact only a few respondents in the sample said that they never discussed the news whereas the rest of the sample said either they discussed the news frequently, sometimes or depending on events.

As Robinson argued, the public's understanding of the news does increase when people talk about it. Robinson's finding (1986) "strongly suggest that interpersonal communication plays a crucial role in the reception, retransmission, and interpretation of mass media messages" (Robinson, 1986, p137). Discussion plays a crucial role in expanding knowledge and stimulating arguments. This means that people could exchange information and simplify complex issues and make them easy to absorb. Political discussion in particular is significant for understanding political issues. As Sceufele argues, "Political talking is necessary as an information source above and beyond mass media that helps people make sense of political events. At the same time, political talk is necessary for any rational discourse and ultimately societal decision making" (Sceufele, 2000, p729).

One of the advantages of globalisation is that it offers a great opportunity to peripheral countries in terms of obtaining access to knowledge and technology. As the technology of television satellite channels became available in the international marketplace, many countries have come to owned and effectively use advanced technology to lessen the core countries' domination particularly in the field of news. This can be clearly seen in the Arab region when some Arab states took the initiative and established competitive sources of news, particularly in the case of satellite channels which then became globally well-known.

Even though the findings of this study showed that satellite channels gained high rate in terms of both watching them and possession of satellite channels. However, there were many barriers which could limit the impact of the satellite channels. In fact majority of elder people expressed their concern about the influence of satellite channels and their impact on adopting alien values particularly among new generations. Elder people didn't express their concern or suspension towards radio for example even though radio share the same features with satellite channel technology in its capability to receive lots of foreign and international channels. This means that television has different effect when it comes to receiving foreign messages which contradict or provoke local cultural or values. Unlike radio Images in television could easily overcome any languages barriers and find its way to the audiences. Dancing, kissing or even advertising clips with sex content could cause embarrassment and disapproval among any of Muslims and Arab countries with religious and conservative social values. This issue in particular was clearly obvious in the elder people concern and was probably the main factor behind their negative attitudes towards satellite television channels.

Also the limitation of time spent of watching satellite channels among students was another barrier which may curtail the impact of satellite channels. This could be understandable as students during their courses were under pressure and probably have less time for watching television. On the other hand the social context of news discussion was quite exclusive only on family and friends. One of the benefits of watching news and political debates are the discussion of these issues raised in them. This is a healthy atmosphere which gives people prospective and deepens their awareness and knowledge on these issues. By excluding the discussion of news on very limited people individuals have no proper chance to test and re-evaluate their attitudes and points of views regarding different political and cultural issues simply because they discuss these issues with only people who have close relationship with.

Ether because people prefer their relatives or friends because they felt comfortable with or they trust them or even they try to avoid any clashes with other people by not discussing news with them particularly political issues.

These barriers could limit the impact and the significance of satellite channels, on the other hand, cultural factors could explain the reasons behind the Libyan audience's preferences for Arab satellite channels rather than international satellite channels. Regional satellite channels in particular pay great attention to peoples cultural, values and traditions. This gives regional channels high approval and labels them as safe outlets among Arab audiences.

The Arab satellite television channels have demonstrated the potential to become more competitive and more reliable in their coverage of news, particularly of events close to home such as the Palestinian issue and the Iraq War. Many Arab audiences can now watch the news and variety of political programmes from an Arabic perspective. This could play a crucial role in terms of their reliability and trustworthy as news outlets for Arab audiences. As discussed in chapter four, Arab satellite television channels have gained a high level of approval among the survey sample in terms of the reliability of their news coverage. Al-Jazeera gained the approval of the majority of the sample and was considered the most reliable channel in its coverage of the Iraq War. Al-Arabiya also gained a considerable number of audiences by providing a reliable source of news during the Iraq War.

On the other hand the Libyan mass media gained a low level of approval among the Libyan people as a source of news. Few of the survey samples chose Libyan television as their first choice and a high percentage didn't even mention Libyan TV in their answers. This points to serious weakness in the performance of Libyan television particularly in terms of the news. Its weakness and difficulties were discussed in more

detail in chapter four. Important issues include, censorship, the lack of training of media staff and advanced technology and the also the legislation which controls the Libyan media. These factors are the main reasons which have created serious difficulties for the Libyan mass media and hampered its performance. The Libyan media experts interviewed elaborated on these issues and provided some possible solutions. However, the key issue in resolving Libyan media problems is to remove the shield of impunity. Accepting criticism in particular is an essential factor in order to overcome any signs of weakness in the Libyan media performance. Criticism is a healthy practice which helps to identify such weakness and deals with them in order to establish a competitive mass media. In fact even discussing issues concerning the Libyan media remains highly political, and is considered to be taboo. Even during the data collection for this study, the majority of the interviewees refused to be tape-recorded because they thought this might be dangerous for them. Therefore the factors discussed by the Libyan media experts should be taken into consideration in order to establish a new strategy for the Libyan media.

Now that the Arab region has witnessed the emergence of many successful and competitive television channels it may become easier for the Libyan government and also for other Arab countries to follow suit and repeat these experiences. In fact, there are three different examples in the Arab region of competitive mass media.

The first is the Lebanese example, which has complex characteristics due to the nature of Lebanon society which is based on political and ethnic diversity. This makes the Lebanon a unique nation in the Arab region. On the other hand it is not easy to generalise from the Lebanon experience in terms of politics or the mass media. In fact Lebanon is a very colourful society and democracy has long been part of its nature. Lebanon has found that democracy is an effective and safe path way for integrating different ethnic groups. Lebanon has a political structure which is based on ethnic

power-sharing between different religious and ethnic groups. This creates a sense of diversity and a significant margin for accepting others with different attitudes and beliefs. The mass media in Lebanon are part of this canvas which operates in parallel with the construction of a society unique in the region. Its range of political parties and ethnic groups creates an ideal atmosphere for the mass media in Lebanon, whereas the majority of Arab countries have less political diversity and are usually ruled by single parties or monarchies.

The second example has been in Saudi Arabia; since the emergence of satellite television in the 1990s. As did other Arab nations, Saudi Arabia found itself under pressure from the new phenomenon of satellite channels which were difficult to restrict or control. Thus a solution was urgently sought. In fact Saudi Arabia established a considerable media presence across the Arab region with channels such as MBC, Al-Arabiya and ART, and also the well-known Arab newspaper *Al-Sharq alawsat*.

This initiative aimed to achieve two main goals. The first was to provide audiences with competitive sources of news and entertainment free from the social and religious pressures which are inherent in the majority of Arab nations. Secondly these sources were to remain under the watchful eye of the Saudi government. The preferred solution was to establish and fund many private media outlets which, nevertheless, are all owned by the Saudi royal family. This policy could be considered as one of the most effective measures used in the Arab region, and the Al-Arabiya news channel is now considered one of the most powerful and reliable sources of news across the region.

Al-Arabiya is another example of successful news programming in the Arab region, and it is the main rival of Al-Jazeera. Even though this channel is considered to be pro-American and less aggressive in dealing with many political and cultural issues in the

Arab region, it could be considered as a good example of a competitive news channel. It is funded by the Saudi Arabian government in order to vie with Al-Jazeera and has become an alternative news source for many Saudis. It is another example of realistic policy in terms of the competitive mass media. Nowadays it is very difficult to ban or control the flow of satellite channels to any country, and so the Saudi government dealt with this issue by providing its people with a convincing alternative rather than stand idly by and allow the population to rely on foreign sources with different agendas. In-fact Al-Arabia has been successful in becoming a competitive news source in the whole Arab region. Even though this channel is funded by the Saudi government it does not pander to or overtly praise the Saudi government. This makes the channel more convincing for people in the region.

The third example is in Qatar, whose government decided to establish Al-Jazeera in the 1980s. Its teams were provided not just with the most advanced technology but also with an atmosphere of freedom which has made Al-Jazeera one of the most powerful satellite channels across the world. On the other hand, the Qatari government also has its own domestic media, which have similar characteristics to those in other Arab countries in terms of covering the government's activities and praising its achievements. These contrasting kinds of media work in parallel without any obvious difficulties. In fact, in both the Qatari and Saudi examples, two sorts of mass media exist following two different policies. One is the domestic mass media and the second is international, aiming to compete with other international mass media and at the same time provide audiences in these nations with good options.

As a competitive news outlet Al-Jazeera illustrates the realistic policy of the Qatari government. In fact, the Qatari government is one of the closest allies of the U.S in the region, whereas Al-Jazeera is considered to be one of the most anti-American media outlets in the world, even accused of giving a voice to terrorism. This has made the

channel a legitimate target for American criticisms as previously discussed. Some may consider the Qatari government's policy contradictory, whereas it could be more appropriately viewed as pragmatic. Yet countries would not be able to create such tools that could generate a relatively fair and independent reporting of American foreign policy, particularly in the Arab region. In fact many countries which are considered to be politically hostile to American policy have not established a similarly effective tools to win the propaganda war against America, even though these countries have the potential to do so.

The main similarity between Al-Jazeera and Al-Arabiya is their realistic policy in the way that they handle a range of controversial issues. Also they share a focus on aiming for success, rather than just becoming a vehicle for the governments that fund them. Both of these channels are under the stewardship of professional teams and have long term policies with clear agendas. This makes both Al-Jazeera and Al-Arabiya ideal examples of well informed, competitive and successful news channels.

Some may argue that it would be difficult to establish competitive mass media in the Arab region due to the restrictions on democracy and freedom of speech; but that could merely be an excuse for failure. In fact Qatar and Saudi Arabia are good examples of determined and realistic policies. By establishing such important channels both the Saudi and Qatari governments have on the one hand met government objectives, and on the other hand employ hundreds of professional workers whose experience benefits the whole region.

Both Al-Jazeera and Al-Arabiya now have a profound influence in the region, not just for their news services but also in terms of performance and style. This has encouraged other Arab channels to improve their own services and performance. So there is now no excuse for other Arab countries which have the potential failing to

establish competitive satellite channels or improving those which already exist, since the successes in Qatar and Saudi Arabia could be repeated elsewhere. Libya is one of those rich Arab countries which has the potential to establish such competitive mass media and follow these successful examples.

CONCLUSION

This chapter has provided an analysis of the main issues of the study in terms of domination in the field of news and the alternatives provided by peripheral countries. Also, the significance of the alternative sources of news coverage in the Arab region. The chapter also discussed the opportunities that have become available to peripheral countries to combat core country news coverage. The evaluation of the Libyan media's performance is also discussed, as well as alternatives available to the Libyan mass media which would make its news outlets more competitive and reliable.

The instruction of this study takes the shape of an upside down pyramid. The starting point examines the domination in the field of media as a global phenomenon. Then, in more precise detail deals with news issues and the monopoly of news coverage. The third stage concentrates on satellite channels as a new phenomenon which could help peripheral countries to set up competitive news sources. Then, a study of two prominent channels; CNN and Al-Jazeera that represent both core countries and peripheral countries, and draw a comparison between these two examples. The study then focuses on the Arab region to evaluate its media and cast a light on its experience in terms of the mass media. This is followed by an evaluation of the Arab regions efforts to combat the one way flow of news and information, and the difficulties that have occurred.

The pyramid end point is the evaluation of Libyan media performance and the Libyan people's attitudes toward local regional and global media. This study showed that there is a gap that still exists between core countries and semi-peripheral countries, particularly in terms of news coverage. Peripheral countries remain struggling to find solutions to the one way flow of information from core countries.

The encouragement of the flow of news and information regionally was one of the alternatives which peripheral counties tried to achieve in order to compete with core counties domination in the field of news. Working collectively was one of the main strategies used before the emergence of satellite channels; however this strategy had a limited impact in terms of news flow as many plans had failed due to the political and funding obstacles that occurred. The Arab region was one of many other regions across the world which tried to establish a means of working collectively in terms of news exchange in particular as an alternative to the core countries monopoly of news.

The experience of collective work in the Arab region had faced many difficulties due to the political differences between Arab countries. The Arab region was considered as an ideal example of peripheral countries that despite the differences between its governments, still has lots in common particularly in terms of its peoples culture and governments policy toward mass media.

The Arab region has witnessed a new phenomenon which enabled Arab audiences to receive information and news in particular, free from government influence. The Arab governments have taken similar measures to curb satellite channels influence particularly in the field of political programmes and news coverage. The Arab governments yield to new technology and in terms of satellite channels still take drastic measures against the rest of the mass media, particularly print media. These measures include censorship and even the imprisonment of journalists. This illustrates

the nature of these regimes and their determination to monopolies the mass media, and uses it as a vehicle for pandering to their achievements.

Some satellite channels in the Arab region such as Al-Jazeera and Al-Arabiya have achieved a high standard of professionalism and have succeeded in competing with international channels such as CNN and BBC. The Libyan people as with other Arab people in the region are highly attracted to satellite channels and they have become their main sources of news.

Libya is one of the Arab countries which have lots in common with the other Arab countries, particularly in terms of mass media. Libyan media has faced many difficulties which weakened its performances. The findings of both questionnaire and interviews showed that Libyan media is weak and lacking a competence. The survey evaluated the Libyan media performance and elaborated on the reasons behind its weakness. These reasons include funding and lack of advances in technology and also in terms of Libyan media legislations. These factors play a crucial role in making the Libyan mass media uncompetitive. There are many possible solutions to the Libyan media problems addressed in this thesis however, the most effective one in terms of satellite channels is to follow one of the three styles established in the Arab regions: Al-Arabiya and MBC which represent Saudi style or Al-Jazeera which represents a Qatari style and finally LBC which represent Lebanese style.

Further work

It would be useful and more effective in building up a new strategy for the Libyan media for a further study to be carried out to deal with Libyan media legislations and journalistic rights, particularly in terms of free access to information. Also a

comprehensive study of Libyan audiences' demands and orientations toward Libyan and foreign news media might consider the Libyan political, cultural and social context.

A further study might include an exploration of news editing, longevity, attractiveness, and diversity as areas of enquiry. This would identify weaknesses and strengths which might assess a developing improvement in a long term Libyan media strategy. Libyan media should establish a two-tier policy in terms of outlets. Domestic outlets with a domestic agenda give high priority to domestic issues. This means that the mass media would become a mirror to Libyan society and should reflect people's daily lives. This could provide Libyan people with an ideal forum for open discussions, and a platform for cultural diversity. As discussed in the general discussion of this thesis Arab countries such as Qatar have established two-tier media and have managed to establish a competitive media environment particularly in terms of news. This could be examined in a further study.

The other forms of media outlets should be prioritized differently, and with a different agenda. These outlets would deal with regional or global issues from a Libyan perspective. In fact, this kind of outlet would require a long term policy with a clear set of objectives. Libya has the potential to establish such a kind of outlets. Libya is considered as one of the richest countries in the Arab region; this should enable it to take the lead in terms of mass media particularly in the western Arab region which has its own characteristics in the Arab world.

Further work could be useful in explaining the failure of many Arab countries to establish a competitive mass media, particularly those nations with the clear potential and requisite wealth such as Libya, Algeria and Oman. Countries such as Mauritania or Yemen, with more limited financial revenues, might be the subject of studies investigating their news outlets contributions and competitiveness. Such investigations

might reveal the reasons behind the recourse to particular attitudes or strategies in competing with core country news media domination.

There are many Arab countries which have not established their own competitive media and prefer to maintain the status quo in this area. Further work could be useful in exploring the attitudes and policies of these countries that have so far not established a competitive media of particular interest are those nations with the clear potential and requisite wealth, such as Libya, Algeria and Oman. On the other hand, further studies might investigate other Arab countries with limited financial potential, such as Mauritania or Yemen. Such investigations and analyses might reveal the reasons behind the recourse of these countries to particular attitudes, policies and strategies regarding the media.

This might help to assess the extent of financial or political circumstances in encouraging these countries to adopt a particular policy or path.

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List of Appendices

Appendix A: The questionnaire

DEAR STUDENTS:

**THIS QUESTIONNAIRE AIMS TO COLLECT DATA AS AN INTEGRAL
ELEMENT OF ACADEMIC RESEARCH REGARDING THE IMPACT OF
SATELLITE TELEVISION CHANNELS ON THE LIBYAN PEOPLE WITH
REGARDS TO NEWS RECEPTION.**

**YOUR CO-OPERATION AND HONEST ANSWERS ARE INVALUABLE IN
DETERMINING THE SUCCESS OF THIS ACADEMIC RESEARCH.YOU
WILL NOT BE IDENTIFIED**

DO YOU CONSENT TO TAKE PART?

YES

☐

NO

☐

Please answer these questions by using a tick (✓) or writing in answers.

1 Sex: Male () Female ()

2 Age

3 Marital status

4 Which languages do you speak?

English ()

French ()

Italian ()

German ()

Others:

5 How many TVs do you have in your family home?

None ()

One ()

Two ()

Three ()

More than Three ()

6 Do you watch satellite channels?

Yes ()

No ()

7 What apparatus do you use to receive television channels?(you can choose more than one answer)

Satellite ()

Rebroadcast company ()

Aerial ()

Connecting with neighbours ()

Others:.....

8 How many hours per day do you watch T.V?

Less than one hour per day ()

From 1 to 2 per day ()

From 2 to 4 per day ()

From 6 to 8 per day ()

More than 8 hours per day ()

- 9 Do you like watching the news?
 Yes ()
 No ()
- 10 What are your favourite channels for watching news? (List in order preference)

- 11 How often do you watch the news?
 Regularly ()
 Quite often ()
 Rarely ()
 Never ()
- 12 What is your favourite time for watching the news?
 Morning ()
 Midday ()
 Afternoon ()
 Evening ()
 No particular time ()
- 13 Which are your favourite languages for listening to the news?(You can chose more than one answer)
 Arabic ()
 English ()
 French ()
 Italian ()
 Spanish ()
 German ()
 Others.....
- 14 Where do you watch the news?
 Home ()
 Café ()
 Work ()
 Elsewhere (please specify)

15 Who do you watch the news with? (You can choose more than one answer.)

Alone	()
Family	()
Friends	()
Colleagues	()
Others.....	

16 What types of news do you watch? (You can choose more than one answer.)

Politics	()
Sports	()
Economics	()
Arts	()
Fashions	()
Sciences	()
Cultures	()
Others.....	

17 How often do you discuss the news?

Frequently	()
Sometimes	()
Rarely	()
Never	()

18 Who do you like to discuss the news with? (you can choose more than one answer)

Friends	()
Colleagues	()
Family	()
Others.....	

19 What issues have you been discussing recently?

.....
.....
.....

- 20 Some people think some news recourses are more reliable than others what do you think?

Some are more reliable
They are all reliable
They are all unreliable

- 21 What channel do you view as the most reliable in reporting the war in Iraq? And why?

.....
.....
.....

- 22 Where do you obtain your domestic news from?

Radio	()
TV	()
Newspapers and magazines	()
Friends	()
Colleagues	()
Family	()
Others

- 23 How many hours per day do you watch Libyan T.V?

Less than one hour per day	()
From 1 to 2 per day	()
From 2 to4 per day	()
From 6 to 8 per day	()
More than 8 hours per day	()

- 24 What is your opinion of news coverage on Libyan TV?

Very good	()
Good	()
Poor	()
Very poor	()

25 What is your opinion of news coverage on Libyan Radio stations?

Very good	()
Good	()
Poor	()
Very poor	()

26 What is your opinion of news coverage on Libyan newspapers and magazines?

Very good	()
Good	()
Poor	()
Very poor	()

27 Would you like to make any further comments?

.....
.....
.....

Appendix B: The Interviews

Appendix B.1- Libyan media experts

- 1 Date of the interview (.....)
- 2 Place of interview (.....)
- 3 Age (.....)
- 4 Sex: Male ☐
Female ☐
- 5 Marital status Married ☐
Single ☐
- 6 Occupation (.....)
- 7 Faculty and subject (.....)
- 8 As a media expert, how do you evaluate the delivery of Libyan media?
- 9 Do you think the Libyan media as it is now could compete with other Arab and international media?
- 10 From your point of view why do Libyan people resort to watching foreign channels?
- 11 What aspects of Libyan TV news coverage do you not like?
- 12 What aspects of Libyan newspapers and magazines news coverage do you not like?
- 13 What aspects of Libyan Radio news coverage do you not like?
- 14 From your point of view what steps should be taken to improve Libyan media?

Appendix B.2 - Media Producers

1- Date of the interview ()

2- Place of interview ()

3- Age ()

4- Sex: ()

☐ Male

☐ Female

5- Marital status:

Married ☐

Single ☐

6- Job title ()

7- What kind of difficulties are the Libyan media facing?

8- What is your evaluation of the Libyan media in the field of news?

9- Do you consider the emergence of satellite channels as positive or negative and why?

10- Do you think that the emergence of TV satellite channels has affected the significance of Libyan media for the Libyan people?

11- From your point of view why do Libyan people rely on foreign news channels?

12- What steps should be taken to improve the Libyan media in general?

Appendix B.3- Older people

1. Date of the interview ()
2. Place of interview ()
3. Age ()
4. Sex: ☐ Male
Female ☐
5. Marriage status:
 ☐ Married
Single ☐
- 6- Occupation ()
- 7- What were the main sources of news for you before the emergence of satellite channels?
- 8- Do you consider the emergence of satellite channels as a positive or negative? Why?
- 9- Do you think that the emergence of satellite channels has affected your relationship with TV, particularly in terms of the amount of daily time spent watching TV?
- 10- From your point of view, what are the most reliable news sources and why?
- 11- What is your main news channel of choice?
- 12- In contrasting with the foreign TV channels how do you evaluate the Libyan TV channels in the field of news?

Appendix C: Globalizing media conglomerates

Business	AOL Time Warner	Disney	Bertelsmann	Viacom	News Corporation	Vivendi Universal
TV and Cinema	12 companies including Warner Bros and Hanna-Barbera, CNN, Time Warner Cable	The Disney Channel, ESPN, ABC plus other major television networks. Walt Disney Pictures, Touchstone, Miramax Films, Buena Vista and 4 other movie companies	Owens UK's Channel 5 plus 22 television stations and 18 radio stations in 10 countries(RTL network)	Owens CBS with 200 affiliated TV stations and global distribution for example through MTV (C. 350 million households), also owns Nickelodeon paramount, United Blockbuster Video, and 104 Cinemas	Owens Fox TV, the largest in the US with 22 stations; 14 Fox companies including 20 th century Fox, sky digital TV, Star TV broadcasts to over 300million people CROSS Asia and Phoenix satellite TV and 4 other channels cover China	Owens Canal + with more than 14 million subscribers in 11 European Countries; Universal Studios; and cinema chains such as the Odeon Chain, Cineplex, United Cinema International
Internet and Telecommunications	AOL, Compuserve, Netscape, Trial-running telephone service over the internet in the US	18 Online ventures including infoseek	Bertelsmann Broadband, Lycos, Barnes&Noble.com and numerous other online ventures			VivendiNet, MP3.com plus 2 major French mobile phone companies and Vivendi Telecom International with operations in several countries
Printed press and publishing houses	Time, Fortune and 33 other titles with a total of 120 million readers. 24 book brands	5 magazine publishing group.4 newspapers, Disney Books	The world's biggest publisher: Random House. Gruner & Jahrs publishes 80 magazines worldwide and owns 9 newspapers	Publishes more than 2000 books titles annually	Owens NewYork post in USA, the Times, the Sun and News of the world in the UK, plus newspapers in Australia, New Zealand, Fiji and Papua HarperCollins and seven other publishing houses	Owens Havas, group of 60 publishing houses selling 80 million books and 40 million CD-ROMS a year
Radio and Recording Companies	52 record labels	29 radio station, 6 music labels	Bertelsmann Music Group (BMG) operates in 54 countries. US labels own 200 labels worldwide	180 radio station in the USA		Universal Music Group has over 20% share of the global music market, major labels are Polygram and Motown operates in 63 countries
Other Businesses	Theme parks,4 sports teams, Warner Bros merchandising stores in 30 countries	Disney theme parks MGM studios, 27 hotels, several sports clubs,720 Disney stores world wide	Bertelsmann Service Group		Australia National Rugby League, the LA Dodgers, and UK football clubs	5 Theme Parks plus Vivendi Environment, the water and utility group including UK train services Connex

Source:(klair,2002,P66)

Appendix D: Arab Television Broadcasting Systems

Category	Name of Country	Date of establishment	Broadcasting Model
(1) 1950s	Algeria	1956	French
	Iraq	1956	British
	Kuwait	1956	British
	Lebanon	1957	French
	Morocco	1954	French
(2) 1960s	Egypt	1960	British
	Libya	1968	British
	Jordan	1968	British
	Syria	1960	French
	Sudan	1962	British
	South Yemen	1964	British
	Saudi Arabia	1965	British
	Tunisia	1966	French
	U.A.Emirates	1969	French
(3) 1970s	Bahrain	1973	British
	Dubai	1978	British
	Djibouti	1972	British
	Oman	1974	British
	North Yemen	1975	British
	Qatar	1970	British
(4) 1980s	Mauritania	1981	British
	Somalia	1981	French

Source :(Elfotaysi, p26)

Appendix E: Rugh's typology of Arab press

	Mobilisation	Loyalist	Diverse	Transitional
Press characteristics				
Ownership	regime agents	private	private	mixed
Variety	Non-diverse	non-diverse	diverse	diverse
View of regime	Strong support	support	pro and con	pro & con
Style and tone	Active	contentious	passive	diverse
Political conditions				
Ruling group	revolutionary	traditional	various	various
Public debate	none	none	active	active
Public opposition	nonexistent	non-existent	established	limited
Countries where system prevails (2003)				
	Syria	Bahrain	Lebanon	Algeria
	Libya	Oman	Morocco	Egypt
	The Sudan	Palestine	Kuwait	Jordan
		Qatar	Yemen	Tunisia
		Saudi Arabia	Iraq	
		UAE		

Source: Rugh (2004, p253)

Appendix F: Level of Restriction

Level	Measures
1	Democratic measures such as voluntary self-limitations
2	Direct actions of police and justice departments
3	Indices of web-sites
4	Filter-systems
5	Limitations of internet-access

Level of Restrictions in Arab countries.

Country	Level
Egypt	3
Iraq	5
Jordan	4
Kuwait	4
Qatar	4
Saudi Arabia	4
Tunisia	3
UAE	3

Source :(Kirchner, 2001, p151)

Appendix G: non governmental Arab satellite Television Networks

Name	Owner's Nationality	Date established	Free-to-air or subscription	Base
MBC	Saudi	1991	free	Dubai
ART	Saudi	1994	subscription	Cairo
Orbit	Saudi	1994	subscription	Rome
Future	Lebanese	1995	free	Beirut
LBCI	Lebanese	1996	free	Beirut
Al-Jazeera	Qatri	1996	free	Doha
ANN	Syrian	1997	free	London
Al-Manar	Lebanese	2000	free	Beirut
Al-Mustaqilla	Tunisian	2000	free	London
NBN	Lebanese	2000	free	Beirut
Dream TV	Egyptian	2001	free	Cairo
Zayn TV	Lebanese	2001	free	Dubai
Al-Mihwar	Egyptian	2002	free	Cairo
Al-Khalifa	Algerian	2002	free	Paris
Al-Arabiya	Saudi	2003	free	Dubai

Source :(Rugh 2004, p219)

Appendix H: Regular Al-Jazeera political program

Title	Host	Type
Opposite Direction (<i>Al-Atijah Al-Mu'akis</i>) More than One Opinion	Faisal al-Qassim	Two guests of opposing views
More than One Opinion (<i>Akthar Min Ra'y</i>)	Sami Haddad	Three guests debate the week's most newsworthy issue
Without Boundaries (<i>Bila Hudud</i>)	Ahmad Mansur	Interview of a prominent person
Islamic Law and Life (<i>Sharia Wal Hayat</i>)	Mahar Abdullah	Contemporary issues from an Islamic perspective
Open Dialogue (<i>Hiwar Maftuh</i>)	Ghassan bin Jiddo	Arab intellectuals discuss a current issue
Scene of the Incident (<i>Mawqi' Al-Hadath</i>)	Hussain Abdlghni	Reporter at a hot spot
Very confidential (<i>Siri Lilghaya</i>)	Yusri Foda	Investigative documentary (Monthly)
Under Scrutiny (<i>That Al-Mijhar</i>)	various	Examines apolitical or social issue
Guest and Issue (<i>Daif Wa Qadia</i>)	Muhammad Kraishan	Interview on a current issue
Al-Jazeera Correspondents' world (<i>Murasilu Al-Jazeera</i>)	Muhammad Burini	Reports from around the world
Private Visit (<i>Ziyara Khassa</i>)	Sami Kulaib	Interview of a prominent person at home
The Weekly File (<i>Al-malif Al-usbui</i>)	Jamal Azar	Discusses prime news of the week
Eyewitnesses to the Era (<i>Shahid ala al-Asr</i>)	Ahmad Mansur	Interviews on past events
A Bit of History (<i>Shay Min Al-Tarikh</i>)	Ahmed Taha	Examines an event in history

Source: (Rugh, 2004, p231)

Appendix I: SW transmitters at the Tripoli-Sabrata site

SW transmitters and power	Supplier	Year
4 x 500 kW	Thomson-CSF	1977 (now being decommissioned)
2 x 500 kW	ABB	1983
1 x 500 kW	ABB	1990
2 x 500 kW	Thomson-CSF	1994
2 x 500 kW	Thomcast	1995

Source: (Wood, 2000, p149)

Appendix J1: current Libyan Newspapers

Newspaper	Publication
Al-Fajer Al-jadeed	daily
Al-Zahfelakdar	daily
Al-Jamahiriya	daily
Bengazi news	daily
Al-Shmess (The Sun)	daily
Al-Fateh	daily
Al-mozaf(the employees)	weekly
Al-Reeadha(sports)	weekly
Al-Daawa elislamiya(the Islamic call)	weekly
Al-shat(the coast)	weekly
Al-marej *	weekly
The Tripoli Post(in English)	weekly
Al-jabel news (the mountain news)	weekly
Al-Taleb (the student)	fortnightly
Al-ardh(the earth)	fortnightly
Al-montejon(the workers)	fortnightly
Garyones *	fortnightly
Al-rama alkdra(the green flag)	fortnightly
Al-shlal(the fountain)	fortnightly
A- shrara alowla(the first spark)	fortnightly
Al-mergheb *	fortnightly
Al-nekat Alkames*	fortnightly
Al-gordabiya *	fortnightly
Wadi alhayat*	fortnightly
Al awroba(the Arabic)	fortnightly
Aljofrah*	fortnightly
Ejdabyah*	fortnightly
Al-asalah(the decency)	fortnightly
Al mal wa elamal(money and businesses)	fortnightly
Al jamaher(the mass)	fortnightly
Al botnan*	fortnightly
Kol alfonon(all arts)	fortnightly
Al bedah(the Sahara)	fortnightly
Al-mezan(the scale)	monthly
Aldardanel*	monthly
Al mohamei(the lawyer)	monthly
Africa*	monthly

Source: The Department of Press Monitoring static, issue no: 173.2005.

* indicates that the newspaper takes it name from particular city or place.

Appendix J2: current Libyan Magazines

Magazine	Publication
Oil magazine	monthly
The Electricity	seasonally
The Arab culture	monthly
Hope	monthly
Agriculture	seasonally
The Libyan Insurance Company	fortnightly
The World of Information	seasonally
The future	monthly
The passenger	seasonally
The customs	seasonally
Historical Researches	seasonally
People's Heritage	seasonally
Ruins	seasonally
The Martyr Magazine	seasonally
The Craftsman	seasonally
The Islamic Call	annual
The architecture	monthly
The African voice	monthly
The investment Magazine	seasonally
Cinema& Theatre Magazine	seasonally
The waves	seasonally
Economic Researches	seasonally
Media Researches	seasonally
Hannibal Magazine	seasonally
Assays Magazine	seasonally
Horizons Magazine	seasonally
The economic awareness	seasonally
The Front Trench	seasonally
University Magazine	seasonally
The Medicine	seasonally
The Congress magazine	seasonally
The sphere Magazine	seasonally
The companion	Seasonally

Source: The Department of Press Monitoring static, issue no: 173.2005.

Appendix K1: Translation of the letters were set from the School of Media and Arts to School of Arts and Social Sciences, School of Economics & Politics, School of Law, and School of medicine

Dear Dean of the Economy/Arts/medicine/Economy/Law school,

I would like to confirm that Mr Ibrahim Ali is one of our team of lecturers at our school and he is carrying out a study about satellite channels, by using both questionnaire and interviews for his collating of data.

We wish you would enable him to carry out his study in your school and provide him with all the help he might need.

Please accept our best regards

Dr Hamed Al-Zaroke
The Dean of School of Media

Appendix K2: A copy of the letters were set from the School of Media and Arts to School of Arts and Social Sciences, School Of Economy & politics, School of Law and School of Medicine

((ان الشعوب لاتنسجم
الامع فنونها وراثتها))



الجمهورية العربية الليبية
الشعبية الاشتراكية العظمى
جامعة الفاتح
كلية الفنون والاعلام

التاريخ / / 13 و.ر
الموافق 27/2/2007 ف
الرقم الاشاري 26-155

الاخ/ د. أمين اللجنة الشعبية / كلية الآداب .

تحية طيبة وبعد

تقيدكم بأن الاخ/ الأستاذ . ابراهيم على عمر هو أحد أعضاء هيئة التدريس
بالكلية . ويقوم بدراسة ميدانية خلال شهر (الطير) حول الفضائيات تشمل جمع بيانات
بوسيلة الاسباز واحد المقالات الشخصية .
نأمل منكم تمكينه من إجراء الدراسة وتقديم المساعدة المطلوبة .

ولكم منا خالص التقدير والاحترام
والسلام عليكم ورحمة الله وبركاته

د. حامد الزويوي

أمين اللجنة الشعبية للكلية



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